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APRIL 10-23, 2019

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Central's Mackbee to retire after 26 years at the helm

BY ROGER BARR

Central High School seniors who receive their diplomas on June 4 are not the only ones at the St. Paul school who will be ending one chapter in their lives and beginning another. Their principal, Mary Mackbee, will be retiring at the end of that month after 26 years at the helm of Central and 53 years of working in the St. Paul Public Schools.

Mackbee, who turns 75 on June 16, will be honored for her years of service to Central at several events this spring, including a sold-out gala on April 14 sponsored by the nonprofit Central High School Foundation, the Central bands' spring concert on May 9 when the school's auditorium will be renamed Mary Mackbee Auditorium, and a public celebration from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, June 1, on the plaza in front of the school at 275 N. Lexington Pkwy. The latter event will include appearances by Minnesota Governor Tim Walz and St. Paul



Central High School principal Mary Mackbee escorts junior Marwa Mohammed down a school hallway in her typical outgoing manner. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

Mayor Melvin Carter III. Carter graduated from Central in 1997, at the end of Mackbee's fourth year at the school.

Mackbee, who was born and raised in New Orleans, attended Xavier University in Louisiana, a historically black Roman Catholic college there. She learned about the St. Paul Public Schools through an exchange of professors between Xavier and Hamline University and was hired by the school district in 1966.

Mackbee taught social studies from 1966-69. She briefly left the district, but returned in 1971 to teach at Mounds Park and Como junior high

CENTRAL'S MACKBEE ► 5

City Council is poised to OK Ryan's changes to Ford site plan

BY JANE MCCLURE

The redevelopment of Ford Motor Company's former assembly plant in Highland Park can include up to 35 single-family homes on Mississippi River Boulevard, or so it appeared at the close of a public hearing before the St. Paul City Council on April 3.

The council is expected to vote on April 10 on master developer Ryan Companies' amendments to the city's master plan for the Ford site, and a majority of council members indicated last week that they will approve the amendments. These include the 35 single-family homes, several changes to the proposed street grid and an increase in off-street parking in the commercial district.

City Council member Chris Tolbert, whose Ward 3 includes the Ford site, urged his colleagues to see the big picture and approve the amendments. The changes, he said, will help the 122-acre development succeed while meeting the city's goals for housing density and affordability, new commercial development, environmental sustainability, parks and open spaces and saving two of the three fields used by Highland Ball.

"The amendments are very reasonable," Tolbert said. He called Ryan "one of the best developers we possibly could have," citing the Minneapolis-based company's local ties and

FORD SITE MASTER PLAN ► 5

A WORK IN PROGRESS

City staff to monitor MN United's opener for ways to improve traffic plan ► 2

HOME IMPROVEMENT



Update worth the wait ► 10

CITY BEAT

St. Paul prepares to assess damage left from spring flood ► 6

ON THE TOWN



Music that's fit for a queen ► 20

SPORTS

It's a numbers game for some local prep softball teams ► 23

VIEWPOINT.....	8
DISTRICT COUNCILS.....	12
KIOSK.....	17
CRIME REPORT	18
HOT DISH	19
CLASSIFIEDS	25

Boy Scouts open ranks to troops exclusively for girls

BY MELENIE SOUCHERAY

Move over, boys. Girls now have a place in the organization formerly known as the Boy Scouts of America. After 109 years, the Boy Scouts have been rechristened Scouts BSA, opening its ranks to troops for girls ages 11-17.

Since February 1, the Boy Scouts of America's Northern Star Council of Minnesota and Western Wisconsin has registered 136 girls in 26 all-girl troops. Eleven of those girls make up Troop 7091 chartered by Pilgrim Lutheran Church, 1935 St. Clair Ave.

"I have five older brothers, and two of them have gotten their Eagle," said Troop 7091's Kathryn Kieser, referring to the BSA's highest award.

"I watched them and thought, 'Why don't I try to get my Eagle?'"

Muriel Alldredge said she joined the troop because "I thought it was a good way to hang out with my friends, but also get things done and meet new people. At the first meeting, they explained that there was a Scout Jamboree that we could go to. I really liked the sound of that. So when I progress through the ranks, I'm going to see if I can go to the National Jamboree."

"I wanted to join Girl Scouts, but I didn't want to do just girly things," said Troop 7091's Twyla Paska. "I just wanted to do something new, and this was that opportunity. I decided I should try it out."

"When we heard that we could join Scouts BSA, it was kind of assumed in my family that

I would," said Lucy Dosch. "It's been kind of a big part of my life since my brother is an Eagle Scout. My dad was his Scout leader for about three years. We decided we'd start a troop, and it was something I'd do."

Lucy's dad is Jerald Dosch, the adult leader of Troop 7091 and an associate professor of biology at Macalester College. "I grew up in a small town in North Dakota and an even smaller town in Colorado," Dosch said. "As a Scout, I got opportunities to do stuff I never would've gotten to do otherwise. Lots of camping, archery, rifle range and a week at summer camp, which was the highlight of the year. When I was a ninth-grader, I went to the Boy Scout Jamboree in Canada.

GIRLS IN SCOUTING ► 3

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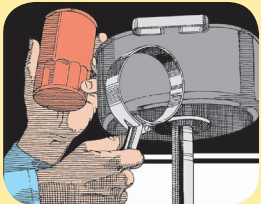
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Stadium traffic plan is a work in progress

City staff to monitor MN United's April 13 opener for ways to improve plan

By JANE McCLURE

Soccer won't be the only thing in play when Minnesota United FC holds its home opener on April 13 at the new Allianz Field at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues. The city of St. Paul's parking and traffic management plan for the anticipated crowd of almost 20,000 fans will be tested, and city staff, the engineering firm SRF Consulting and neighborhood volunteers will be monitoring how well the plan works.

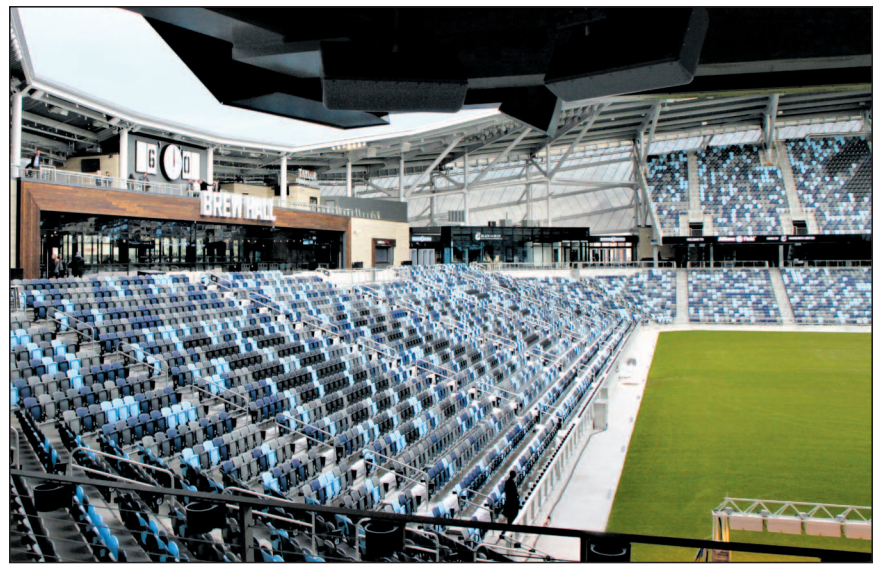
The city and SRF released a 39-page transportation management plan in late March. However, that plan was still being tweaked as of late last week. A new parking app is expected to be rolled out before the first game. Other communication strategies, traffic control measures and directional signs will be rolled out as needed depending on the game-day experience.

A 2016 environmental review for the soccer stadium raised concerns about parking, traffic congestion and transit capacity. The city's parking and traffic management plan has been in the works for the past 18 months to address those issues, according to Pat Corkle, a principal with SRF, and it may be modified as Minnesota United's inaugural season gets underway.

"We'll be out there for the first three to four games refining the transportation management plan as we see it in action," Corkle said. "We'll kind of have to figure it out as we go along."

A major focus of the plan is to deter soccer fans from parking on neighborhood streets, according to senior city planner Josh Williams. If those streets become congested, neighbors can petition for resident-only permit parking, he said. In fact, one new permit parking district has already been proposed and another may expand in neighborhoods southeast and southwest of the stadium.

The city has contacted Midway Center and Midway Marketplace businesses that saw their parking lots used by stadium visitors during a March 24 open house for Minnesota United season ticketholders. According to St. Paul



Close to 20,000 fans are expected to fill the seats and standing-room areas of MN United's new stadium at Snelling and St. Anthony avenues when the Major League Soccer team holds its home opener on April 13. PHOTO BY LOU MICHAELS

Police Senior Commander Kurtis Hallstrom, it will be up to those property owners to patrol their parking lots and have the cars of soccer fans towed away if necessary. "They'll probably only do that once," Hallstrom said of fans who park illegally in private lots.

Despite the likely demand, local residents and business owners are not allowed to lease their properties for parking without a city permit. Parking in yards or on other grass surfaces is also forbidden. However, a service called Parkpool.com has been flying the Merriam Park and Hamline-Midway neighborhoods offering to advertise homeowners and businesses who have a driveway they are willing to open up to soccer fans.

Allianz Field is expected to host between 20 and 25 "capacity sporting events" each year. The city's parking and traffic management plan estimates that 2,500 fans will walk or bike to games, 1,000 will take private charter or local buses, and 1,000 will take taxis or ride-share vehicles. Another 6,300 are expected to arrive on Green Line light-rail trains and 1,200 on Snelling Avenue A Line buses.

About 4,300 fans are expected to park in the 2,500 spaces available at the Minnesota State Fairgrounds and ride free shuttle buses to the games. That leaves about 3,200 fans who will be driving and should be able to find parking spaces in

the nearby Spruce Tree parking ramp, the private Health East parking lot on St. Anthony and Aldine Street or the 400-space stadium parking lots. Minnesota United has been informing ticketholders of the need to reserve parking in advance or use other ways to get to the games.

The State Fairgrounds is the only place where tailgating will be allowed. The soccer team has been asked not to schedule games during the fair, and so far they have not been.

The soccer stadium can accommodate up to 400 bicycles in its bike parking areas. That is well below the number of fans who are expected to arrive by bike, and that concerned members of the city's Transportation Committee. According to them, much more bicycle parking is needed.

The city is planning to restrict traffic on streets around the stadium with partial closures on game days, according to city stadium spokesperson Sam Fetting. If motorists need to get through the area, they can be accommodated, he added, but the city is not advertising that such accommodations will be made.

"If people march to games, are we ready for that?" asked Transportation Committee member Kevin Gallatin.

Large groups of fans have been known to march to soccer matches at TCF Bank Stadium, and Corkle said that possibility on April 13 has yet to be considered.

Potholed Ayd Mill Rd. will get new surface

By JANE McCLURE

Ayd Mill Road will get a new surface this construction season, two years earlier than originally scheduled. That comes as welcome news for motorists who have long complained about potholes on the 1.5-mile-long street and the damage they have caused to their vehicles. Drivers have posted complaints on social media about flat tires, alignment problems and even broken axles incurred from potholes on the road. One person even posted a version of the video game Oregon Trail to describe the street's rough condition.

The city of St. Paul's asphalt plant opened for the pothole-patching season in mid-March. However, asphalt patches will not be enough to address the problems on Ayd Mill Road, according to Kathy Lantry, St. Paul's director Public Works. "The road is in a condition where it needs a mill and overlay," Lantry said. "It just can't wait any longer."

Mill and overlay work involves grinding off the top 2 inches of a street and

then laying down a new surface. It will typically resolve problems for five to 10 years. How long the new surface will last on Ayd Mill Road is uncertain since the city street is in a valley that has a spring and is susceptible to the freezing and thawing of runoff.

The mill and overlay project has an estimated cost of \$3.5 million. Public Works was able to bump up the project after residents in the Woodlawn-Jefferson area opted out of a previously scheduled \$6 million street reconstruction project. Neighbors there had objected to a city requirement that sidewalks be installed as part of the street reconstruction, so that project has been postponed.

The mill and overlay work is the first extensive project on Ayd Mill Road since 2003 when the street got a two-inch topcoat over its concrete surface. That was done at the behest of then-Mayor Randy Kelly, who connected the south end of Ayd Mill Road to I-35E over the protests of residents at the north end. In 2007 then-Mayor Chris Coleman sought funding to rebuild Ayd Mill as a two-

lane parkway with a north-end connection to the I-94 frontage roads. However, the funding was not found and that never happened.

Lantry emphasized that this year's project is a mill and overlay only. Public Works is willing to look at other improvements to Ayd Mill Road, she said, including changes to traffic lanes and new bike and pedestrian paths, but the money is not available this year. In 2007, the reconstruction of Ayd Mill Road was estimated at \$44 million.

Ayd Mill Road now carries about 24,000 vehicles per day. It was originally planned as a direct connection between I-35E and I-94. City officials began purchasing property for the roadway in 1960, and the street was completed in 1965. However, the long legal battle over I-35E's construction in St. Paul delayed its connection to the freeway system.

The street was renamed Ayd Mill Road in 1987 in honor of John Ayd, a German immigrant who operated a grist mill in the valley just north of Jefferson Avenue.



Scoutmaster Jerald Dosch and members of his Troop 7091 sponsored by Pilgrim Lutheran Church posed for a photo during a night of rock climbing and archery at the BSA's Base Camp at Fort Snelling. From left are Scouts Muriel Aldredge, 13, Kathryn Kieser, 12, Lucy Dosch, 13, Annika Hennly, 11, and Lilah Abraham, 12. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

1 GIRLS IN SCOUTING

For a small-town kid, that was absolutely amazing.”

This spring Dosch is sharing those experiences with the girls of his troop, teaching them myriad skills, including leadership.

Scouts BSA, like the Boy Scouts before it, plan and execute their own activities. “There’s a cartoon I show new Scouts,” Dosch said. “It’s just two panels. On one panel is Snoopy as the scoutmaster being followed by a bunch of Woodstocks. It says ‘Cub Scouts.’ In the next panel, it’s Snoopy following all of the Woodstocks, and the caption says ‘Boy Scouts.’ That’s the way it’s supposed to be. I’m not here to lead. I’m here to make sure (the Scouts) are safe, to provide some scaffolding for learning about leadership, and to provide some guidance. I ask, ‘What are your dreams? What do you want to do?’”

“Our mission is to help young people grow in character, citizenship and fitness,” said Kent York, the Northern Star Council’s director of marketing and communications. “That’s what we do. It’s not gender-specific.” According to York, there are no co-ed troops in Scouts BSA. However, a chartering organization may opt to have their separate single-sex troops work on joint projects.

Scouts BSA is using the same curriculum developed by the Boy Scouts of America over the organization’s long history. “Those are things that young women have not necessarily had the opportunity to do,” York said.

The BSA has four programs for youths—Cub Scouts for ages 5-11, Scouts BSA for ages 11-17, and Venturing and Explorers for ages 14-20. The Northern Star Council has about 31,600 youths registered for these pro-



Lucy Dosch, 13, descends from the cliff at BSA's Base Camp as fellow Troop 7091 Scout Muriel Aldredge, 13, and Base Camp guide Stefan Chelssen look on.

grams, but that number had been trending downward. According to York, the Northern Star Council served about 11 percent of regional youths in 2012 and about 9 percent in 2018.

Prior to introducing Scouts BSA, the BSA conducted extensive market research. “One of the biggest things we heard about is the time crunch (for families),” York said. “Dual working parents and single-parent families have limited time. When I was a young person growing up in Scouting, the meetings were held right after school in the home of the den mother. Now parents are working, so the meetings take place in the evening and on weekends. It can become diffi-

cult for parents.”

Since last August, the BSA has allowed Cub Scout packs to go co-ed as a way of keeping families together, according to York. The Northern Star Council has a total of 16,779 Cub Scouts, about 1,400 of them girls.

Leading up to the BSA’s rollout of Scouts BSA, concerns were expressed about the effect it might have on Girl Scouts USA. A representative of the local River Valleys Council of Girl Scouts USA could not be reached for comment for this story, but according to the council’s website, it serves close to 30,000 girls in southern Minnesota, western Wisconsin and Iowa.

Tish Bolger, CEO of Girl Scouts River Valleys, is quoted on the website: “Girl Scouts has been the premier girl leadership development organization and the girl expert for over 100 years. There is no organization that more thoroughly understands the value of programming designed specifically for girls and delivered in an inclusive, all-girl learning space. We offer girls the single best leadership experience in the world, helping families that seek to support the development of their girls into strong, confident women.”

Allowing girls to join Cub Scout packs or form Scouts BSA troops is not about Boy Scouts vs. Girl Scouts, York said, but about offering new options for families. Boy Scouts of America has evolved since its founding in 1910, he said, and a lot of things have changed over the years.

“We don’t want to be bound by the past,” York said. “We want to continue to fulfill our mission.”

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Rezoning of 770 Grand opens door to Treats

By JANE MCCLURE

The St. Paul City Council voted 5-1 on March 27 to rezone 770 Grand Ave. from Community Business Converted (BC) to Traditional Neighborhoods 2 (TN2). The change makes it possible for Treats, an ice cream shop and tea house, to open there. However, opponents fear it will also open the door to more intensive land uses on Grand.

"We're hearing a lot of concern about the future of the avenue," said City Council member Rebecca Noecker, whose Ward 2 includes the eastern half of Grand. Noecker believes the city needs to take a fresh look at Grand's zoning, a study that the Summit Hill Association (SHA) and opponents of the recent rezoning have also requested.

Noecker supported rezoning 770 Grand as the best way to allow Treats to open there. BC zoning, which is a business zone for residential structures in commercial areas, does not allow restaurants or other businesses that generate a lot of traffic, and an ice cream shop is technically a restaurant by the city's definition. "I do think, though, that there's a difference between rezoning this property and getting rid of BC zoning entirely (on Grand)," Noecker said.

Noecker was joined in her support by City Council members Amy Brendmoen, Kassim Busuri, Mitra Jalali Nelson and Chris Tolbert. City Council

member Jane Prince opposed the rezoning, and Dai Thao was absent.

Prince is worried that the rezoning will lead to the rezoning of other BC properties on Grand. However, she added, "I heard the (owner of 770 Grand) promise that he has no intention of demolishing the building or of expanding the building with one of those really ugly additions that would bring the building up to the property line."

"I've never seen so many vacancies on Grand as there are now," said Gary Huffman, co-owner of Grand Old Creamery at 750 Grand Ave. Huffman asked the City Council whether it could find a way short of rezoning to allow Treats to move into a BC-zoned property.

Shem Shakiti, whose family owns 770 Grand, said his family has no intention of tearing down the converted house that they have owned since 1993. He said he grew up in the house, where his mother ran a hair salon from 1993-2017, and has great respect for the character of Grand. "We would never jeopardize that," he said.

Shakiti's family had sought a new tenant for the commercial space at 770 Grand for many months with no success. Treats is owned by husband and wife Vorak Seng and Trisha Dinh, who live in Shakopee but plan to move into the upstairs apartment at 770 Grand. Their family also owns Jamba Juice at Grand and Snelling avenues and several

restaurants, including Waffle Bar & Tea in Minneapolis. Seng and Dinh said that leasing other restaurant space currently available on Grand would be too costly for Treats.

Opponents of the rezoning argued that the new TN2 zoning could lead to the demolition of the house at 770 Grand and a more intensive use of the property. TN2 zoning would allow a building of up to 35 feet in height with no setback from the sidewalk.

"Consider the long-term, best interests of Grand," said Chuck Repke, who represented the Huffman family at the hearing.

Repke served on the St. Paul Planning Commission in the 1980s when BC zoning was first established by the city to allow small businesses to move into former houses while retaining the historical architecture of Grand. At the time, there was pressure to demolish houses on Grand and construct commercial buildings. Grand has about 40 properties that are zoned BC between Dale Street and Ayd Mill Road.

Former Ward 2 City Council member Dave Thune also testified against the rezoning. Thune recalled his two decades of effort to preserve the architectural character of Grand. "We've jealously protected Grand Avenue and worked to keep its charm," Thune said. "You'll kill the golden goose that is Grand by plucking it one pinfeather at a time."

St. Paul's home values climb 7.8% on average

By JANE MCCLURE

Home property values continued to climb across St. Paul over the past year, according to a report from the Ramsey County Assessor's Office. The city's median-value home increased by 7.8 percent to \$198,000. Individual neighborhoods saw a wide range of increases.

Citywide, Frogtown showed the biggest increase in its median-value home, climbing 18.6 percent from \$129,900 to \$153,766. Summit Hill showed the smallest with its median home value rising by 5.5 percent, from \$381,500 to \$402,450. The West End saw an 11 percent increase in its median-value home, from \$176,250 to \$195,650.

Summit-University home values climbed 7.7 percent, from \$213,000 to \$239,000. Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline homes rose from \$301,200 to \$324,000 over the past year, a 7.6 percent increase. In Highland Park, the median-value home increased from \$313,500 to \$334,950, a 6.8 percent increase. Macalester-Groveland's median-value home rose from \$329,000 to \$350,000, a 6.4 percent hike. Downtown saw a 5.9 percent increase in its median-value home, from \$169,500 to \$179,500.

Ramsey County held two "open book" days during the first week of April for property owners to ask Assessor's Office staff about their taxes and question their property's assessed value. Property owners who wish to contest their assessed

value may call 651-266-2131 to set up a time to discuss property taxes and schedule an inspection of their property. They are advised to have a recent appraisal of their home, a real estate market analysis or information on the sale of similar homes in their area.

Ramsey County's Board of Appeal and Equalization will convene on May 3 to begin its review of property value appeals. Anyone wishing to go through a board appeal process needs to do so before June 28. After that date, the only option is to take an appeal to Minnesota Tax Court, which carries a cost.

To view the Ramsey County Assessor's Report for 2019, visit tinyurl.com/yyqxaqzw.

City hearings set on \$600,000 in unpaid trash bills

By JANE MCCLURE

More than \$600,000 in unpaid bills for residential trash collection in St. Paul will be the focus of legislative hearings beginning on April 11 in City Hall. The hearings will be watched closely by opponents as well as supporters of St. Paul's organized trash collection program.

The new system, which got underway last October, requires every single-family home and two- to four-unit apartment building to pay for weekly or every-other-week service by the trash hauler assigned to the neighborhood. There are 73,485 St. Paul households enrolled in the program, and more than 6,000 of them have not paid their trash bills for the past three months or more, according to Ellen Biales, administrative program manager in the St. Paul Department of Public Works.

The \$600,000-plus in delinquent bills is slightly more than the city had anticipated in the first six months of organized trash collection, Biales said. When the program was set up, the city created

financial models that predicted about 10 percent in delinquent bills. The actual amount is just over 11 percent.

Notices for late trash bills went out in March. People who had not paid their bills were told in February that they could contact the city to challenge the statements. Of the 391 people who challenged their statements, 51 had their bills waived or reduced.

Twenty dates have been set aside in April and May for the legislative hearings on trash bills, according to Biales. About 25 legislative hearings will be held each day, she said, and more dates will be added if needed. To request a hearing, call 651-266-6100 or visit stpaul.gov/hearinggarbage.

It is best to schedule a hearing in advance, Biales said, and to bring as much documentation as possible. "If people are prepared, they can make a better case," she said. "And if they sign up in advance, we can have their records ready at the hearing."

If a trash bill is not resolved at the legislative hearing, residents can choose to take the matter to the City Council for

a second hearing. Those hearings would be held on or after May 22.

The group St. Paul Trash, which recently filed suit against the city over organized collection, is urging people who are challenging their trash bills to request a legislative hearing and is urging its supporters to attend the hearings.

Property owners whose trash bills are not waived and still do not pay them could have the amount due added to their 2020 property tax bill. They also can take their case to Ramsey County District Court.

Fifteen private haulers took part in contract negotiations with the city in the months leading up to the adoption of organized trash collection. Eleven private haulers actually signed the contract as St. Paul Haulers LLC. Four of the haulers' market shares have since been bought out by others.

That leaves just seven haulers in the program: Waste Management, Advanced Disposal, Aspen Waste Systems, Gene's Disposal Services, Highland Sanitation, Pete's Rubbish Hauling and Republic Service.

1 ◀ CENTRAL'S MACKBEE

schools before training to become a principal. Following an internship at Como, she served as associate principal at Harding High School, was hired to head the school district's Career Studies program and returned to Harding as principal in 1984. In 1987 she became the district's director of secondary education, and when the superintendent "fired" her from that job, Mackbee said, she assigned herself the principal's job at Central.

Actually, "Central chose me," Mackbee said with a laugh. "It was the only available opening. I also felt I needed to prove myself. I thought if I could do this job well, it would prove myself as a leader."

When she started in 1993, Central's student body was largely African-American and struggling, according to Mackbee. Today, the school is "a strong, vibrant community school with a tremendous amount of loyalty in terms of its alumni and neighborhood," she said. Though still largely a neighborhood school, Central's 1,800 students are now much more diverse, both racially and economically.

In addition to International Baccalaureate and Advanced Placement programs, Central offers French and German language immersion programs and classes in acting, dance, the culinary arts, auto mechanics, audio technology and construction. The high school is meeting the state's target of 77 percent proficiency in standardized testing in each of the categories measured, Mackbee said, and the school's four-year graduation rate hovers between 88 and 92 percent.

"The biggest problem we have today is a lack of students of color in our gifted programs," Mackbee said. "Barriers have been removed, but it's still difficult to get kids enrolled." Some students of color "have felt out of place in advanced classes and dropped out," she said.

Ask anyone why Mackbee has been so



Central High School principal Mary Mackbee catches up with senior Yoshi Thao during lunch in the cafeteria. After 26 years at the helm, she is retiring. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

successful at Central, and you will get variations of the same answer. "It's her commitment to student achievement, to student participation," said Jack Schlukebier, who taught social studies at Central for 33 years before retiring in 2014. "She arrives at Central at 6:30 a.m. Often it's 6:30 to 8 p.m. before she leaves. She goes to everything—concerts, sports, plays. I've never seen that kind of commitment from a leader."

Mackbee's commitment to students has earned her widespread admiration and respect. "She can be like a mom to students," said Central senior Daveonte Davis. "She's someone you can't miss around school. I talk to her every day. She wants the best for

everybody."

Sophomore Firdowsa Hashim appreciates Mackbee's approachability. "You can walk right up to her," Hashim said. "You can be yourself talking to her. She's helped me with a personal problem, and I feel grateful."

"Mary has an outstanding relationship with the teachers in her building," said Jean O'Connell, a 1970 Central graduate and former St. Paul School Board member. "She's a master at listening and stretching budgets and other resources to make things happen in such diverse areas as IB, music, theater and auto shop."

Under Mackbee's leadership, Central teachers feel safe and encouraged to do their jobs,

according to Schlukebier. "Our turnover at Central is due to retirement," he said. "People aren't trying to get out; they're trying to get in."

Dennis St. Sauver, a former principal and district administrator in the St. Paul Public Schools, found Mackbee a "delight" to work with. "All of her peers respected her," he said. "At district-level meetings, Mary was often called upon for her opinion regarding school and district issues. Her voice was one of reason and insight."

Mackbee has been recognized with a host of awards over the years. The Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals twice named her principal of the year in the Capitol Division. She was named Administrator of the Year by the Minnesota Association of Secretaries to the Principal in 2013 and by the Minnesota Association of School Counselors in 2014.

Despite her success, Mackbee leaves Central with some regrets. "We still haven't been able to reduce the number of black males who get suspended," she said. "We haven't increased significantly the number of teachers of color. We still haven't gotten a huge participation rate from our students of color (in activities)." And Central's parent advisory council does not have as strong a representation from parents of color as Mackbee would like.

In retirement, Mackbee plans "to catch up on my sleep during the first year," she said. She is also looking forward to having more time for retired friends, for reading and cooking, and for more regular exercise than pacing the halls of Central. She may also do some volunteer work.

"I love thrift stores," Mackbee said. "I may volunteer at one." She may also volunteer in the schools, mentoring new principals and substituting for others.

"I know I'll miss it," Mackbee said of her career in education. "It's been 50 years of my life. It'll be quite a void."

1 ◀ FORD SITE MASTER PLAN

track record of citizen engagement.

City Council members Amy Brendmoen, Kassim Busuri, Jane Prince and Dai Thao said they also supported the amendments. Council members Rebecca Noecker and Mitra Jalali Nelson said they did not. Nelson was especially critical of the amendment for single-family homes on river road. The amendment calls for housing of from one to six units on the 35 river road lots rather than from two to six units. Nelson said that would open the way to new "mansions."

Thao, who has worked with Ryan on two mixed-use developments at Selby and Snelling avenues in his Ward 1, praised the company for being responsive to local residents and business people. He said the Ford site presents a unique opportunity to provide badly needed housing and boost the city's property tax base.

Prince praised Ryan officials for creating an atmosphere in meetings about the Ford site where people felt listened to and could talk about their hopes for the future. "I think this gets us to where we want to go," she said of the city's master plan for the Ford site as amended by Ryan. "To suggest that this is anything

other than our shared values is a mistake."

Close to 70 people turned out for the April 3 hearing on the master plan amendments. More than two dozen testified for and against.

The Planning Commission had recommended approval of close to 90 percent of the changes sought by Ryan. Among the sticking points were the single-family homes on Mississippi River Boulevard, the increase in commercial parking and several street grid changes.

Tony Barranco, Ryan's senior vice president for development, said the amendments would make the redevelopment project more viable and better able to meet the demand for a variety of housing types. "These are the items we need to make the project succeed," he said.

Barranco pointed out that Ryan will be meeting the city's goals for affordable housing. About 3,800 new housing units will be built on the Ford site—which is down from the city's maximum of 4,000—but 20 percent, or about 750, will be affordable to households earning between 30 and 60 percent of the region's median income.

Ryan will be working with Project for Pride in Living and CommonBond Communities on providing the affordable housing. "This

is one of the largest and boldest affordable housing projects this city has undertaken," Barranco said.

Paul Williams, president and CEO of Project for Pride in Living, agreed that the vision for affordable housing is bold, but he said he is confident that Ryan is up to the task.

Referring to the years of public meetings on Ford site planning, Highland District Council Community Development Committee chairman Frank Jossi recalled hearing "over and over again, 'Could we have a few single-family homes on the site?'" Jossi praised Ryan for its willingness to meet with neighbors and listen. Single-family homes would fit in well on Mississippi River Boulevard, he said, which is already lined with single-family homes north and south of the Ford site.

That sentiment for single-family homes was not universal. Opponents of the amendments criticized Ryan and the City Council for creating what several called a "wealth zone" that ran counter to their desire for economic equity.

According to Rob Wales, a leader of the advocacy group Sustain Ward 3, Ryan's amendments "jeopardize the vision" of the Ford site master plan for housing density and for

promoting transit, bicycling and walking.

Sustain Ward 3 objected to the master plan amendment that could double the amount of parking spaces in commercial ramps from one stall per 400 square feet of gross floor area to one stall per 200 square feet, Wales said. Ryan sought the change to make the site more attractive to retail tenants. However, "increasing parking increases driving to the site," Wales said. Ryan's amendments run the risk of creating an "inequitable development," he said.

Sustain Ward 3 also objected to removing an extension of Saunders Avenue in order to save two of the three ballfields that serve youths in the recreational leagues run by Highland Ball. Wales said the Saunders extension should not be removed without providing additional access in that area for pedestrians, bicyclists and emergency vehicles.

Margaret Cherne-Hendrick, a policy advocate with Fresh Energy, also testified in favor of less parking, less reliability on motor vehicles and more ways to promote biking and walking. In the interests of environmental innovation and sustainable development, she said, "we have a rare and important opportunity to do things differently."

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St. Paul prepares to assess damage left by spring flood

By JANE McCLURE

With the swollen Mississippi River cresting at 20.19 feet in St. Paul on March 31, city crews face a long and expensive cleanup process. Riverside streets, parks and trails will remain closed until the water subsides.

This spring's crest was the seventh-highest in the city's history, according to preliminary figures from the National Weather Service. The 1965 flood is the record-holder at 26.01 feet. Flood levels are measured at a gauge at the Robert Street Bridge in downtown.

By the early morning of April 8, the water had receded to about 17 feet, which is considered major flood stage.

City emergency management staff stated in an update that though "the Mississippi River in St. Paul has crested, the water will remain above major flood stage for at least a week, and above flood stage (14 feet) for much longer. Roads and parks will not reopen until the water recedes, infrastructure is inspected/cleaned and determined (to be) safe."

People were being asked to be patient as the water slowly recedes. Motorists should continue to follow posted signs and not drive around barricades or through water-covered areas.

Flood watchers have been causing some headaches for city officials. "We've seen and

heard of many people going up to the water or venturing onto it to take pictures and even kayak through it. This is dangerous," the update stated. "The river is flowing at a staggering fast pace, churning up debris, tree limbs, sand/silt and anything else it has. You don't know what's in the water or underneath the water. Please stay away and observe from a distance."

St. Paul street closings included parts of Childs Road, Warner and Shepard roads, Jackson and Sibley streets, Water Street and Lilydale Road.

The street closings are scheduled to end on May 1, but that depends on the extent of the cleanup needed. One recent estimate for the cleanup was \$750,000, though St. Paul Public Works director Kathy Lantry said the true cost will not be known until flooded streets can be checked out. It also was not known whether the city would be granted any state or federal funding for the cleanup.

As of last week the public was being advised to check online before visiting a park or using a riverfront street, even after the waters recede. The Meeker Island Dog Park, Hidden Falls, Crosby Farm, Harriet Island, Raspberry Island and Lilydale parks were all closed in late March due to flooding.

Clare Cloyd of the St. Paul Parks and Recreation said most of the city's parks along the Mississippi are designed to handle flood-



Harper Caster, Lucia Samayoa and Adelene Caster scanned the flooded grounds of Harriet Island Regional Park with the Mississippi River lapping at their feet while sitting on the edge of the park's Target Stage on March 30. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

ing. "Once the river recedes to approximately 16.5 feet, staff can begin assessing impacted areas," Cloyd said. Based on current projections, that was expected to be by April 9.

Electricity and sewer connections will be restored around that same time. Depending on the extent of the water damage, restoring the parks to normal status generally takes several weeks, Cloyd said.

Fort Snelling State Park closed on March 25

due to flooding and interpretive events there have been canceled through mid-April. "We know how eager folks are to get out and enjoy nature now that spring has finally arrived, so closing the park—or even limiting access—is not a decision we make lightly," said Fort Snelling park manager Kelli Bruns.

For updates on park closures, visit stpaul.gov/departments/emergency-management/flood-preparations.

Hearing set on St. Paul's 20-year plan for land use along river

By JANE McCLURE

St. Paul's 20-year plan for the Mississippi River corridor will be the subject of a public hearing before the city's Planning Commission at 8:30 a.m. Friday, April 19. The purpose of the proposed 2040 plan for the river is to protect the corridor as a diverse ecosystem while promoting it as an economically vibrant asset of the city. Encouraging appropriate development near the Mississippi and preserving public access to the river are other goals outlined in the plan.

St. Paul's stretch of the Mississippi River runs for 17 miles and includes 26 miles of shoreline. "We had to look at a lot of issues when we wrote the river chapter," said Lucy Thompson, a principal planner in the city's Department of Planning and Economic

Development. "We needed to balance the many ways that the river is a great resource for St. Paul."

The 2040 plan for the river corridor governs land use with new policies about where developers can build and where wetlands must be protected. It establishes six new zoning classifications—rural and open space, river neighborhood, river towns and crossings, separated from river districts, urban mixed district, and urban core district. Each zoning district has its own rules for future land uses and building heights and setbacks.

What sets the river chapter apart from other chapters in the 2040 plan is the number of regulatory agencies involved. While the city takes the lead when it comes to overall land use, historic preservation, housing and open spaces, it defers to the Minnesota Department

of Natural Resources (DNR) and the National Park Service when it comes to the Mississippi River corridor. The corridor is regulated by the state's Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) and the federal Mississippi National River and Recreation Area.

Four parts of the city's proposed plan for the river are in conflict with MRCCA rules, according to Thompson. One conflict is on the site of the former Ford Motor Company plant in Highland Park where the city has established zoning districts that allow buildings up to 17 feet higher than MRCCA rules permit. Another conflict is in the Shepard-Davern area where heights of up to 55 feet are allowed by the city with a conditional use permit, or 7 feet above what the MRCCA allows.

The city's plan for the West Side Flats allows heights of up to 90 feet with a conditional

use permit. The city has also designated the area around Pig's Eye Lake as industrial, with building heights of 75 feet or more, in conflict with the MRCCA's underlying zoning.

Following the April 19 public hearing, the Planning Commission will send the 2040 plan for the river corridor to the City Council for a second public hearing, most likely in June.

The plan for the river is the seventh and final chapter in the city's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The other chapters governing such topics as land use, historic preservation, housing and open space have already been recommended by the Planning Commission and will be reviewed in a public hearing before the City Council on May 15.

The city's entire 2040 Comprehensive Plan will then go to the Metropolitan Council and the Minnesota DNR for final approval.

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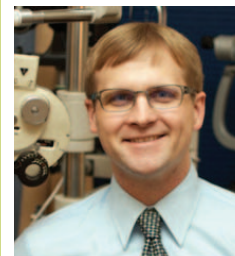


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Riley grew up in St. Paul’s Merriam Park neighborhood. She attended Cretin-Derham Hall high school and Richmond, the American International University in London, where she completed a degree in art and graphic design. While there, Riley grew to appreciate how urban Brits bring nature into the city.

“They do such amazing things with about a fourth of the size of the yard we have here. You walk into these little walled gardens and it’s a whole different world. You can do a lot with a little plot in the middle of St. Paul – going back to nature, making it a wild space that touches your spirit.”

Riley earned a master’s degree in landscape architecture from the University of Minnesota. She has five years of experience renovating estate-scale sites under her belt and rich soil under her nails.

She has laced up her work boots and put on her entrepreneur’s hat. Riley is ready to work with like-minded homeowners on a smaller scale, using a palette of color and texture, native plants and hardscaping.

Riley starts by visiting with clients to explore how they want to use their yards. “For example, do they want a patio or a fire pit? People often say they want low-maintenance, pretty things. They have this adverse reaction to prairie plants, because they look scruffy.”



Eutierria Garden Design owner Catherine Riley arranges a spring planter.

But, once Riley explains about what those plants actually do for the environment and why they’re preferable to ornamental plants, “People are happy to have them in their yard.”

To learn more about Eutierria Garden Design, contact Catherine Riley at 651-395-1153 or catherinesriley@gmail.com.

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Viewpoint

Hearings on St. Paul land-use issues are so much wasted breath

BY ANDREW RORVIG

There appear to be numerous opportunities for citizen engagement on land-use issues in St. Paul. The process is usually initiated by the Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED). A vetting by the local district council follows. Next is an intermediary review with public hearings before the city's Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) or Planning Commission. Finally, there are public hearings before the City Council.

All three public reviews should allow the parties meaningful opportunities to flesh out issues of fact and law. Yet, with most projects, the deal is done by the time it reaches the public. For average citizens, the chance of obtaining an outcome different than the one recommended by city staff is slim at best.

Take 2018 for example. In that year the City Council heard 11 appeals of BZA or Planning Commission decisions. Developers or other property owners seeking permits, variances or reviews of unfavorable administrative decisions brought six of those appeals. Neighbors or other stakeholders who opposed the granting of permits, variances or decisions made the other five appeals. In almost every case, the BZA or Planning Commission approved the city staff recommendation and the City Council denied the appeal to overturn that decision.

In fact, since 2015 there has been only one instance of a stakeholder successfully challenging a BZA or Planning Commission decision in favor of an institutional or income-generating development. And even that victory was undone when the luxury condominium project at 1174 Grand Ave. returned in 2016 with a three-square-foot change in requested lot coverage.

The false appearance of citizen engagement should be enough to cause St. Paulites to question the system. Add to that a recent example of incompetence or worse, and there is plenty of reason to blow up that system. In January, the Planning Commission considered the demolition of historic St. Andrew's Church in the Como neighborhood to allow the German Immersion charter school to proceed with the construction of a new building.

City staff had recommended approval of the variances needed for the demolition. The Planning Commission took testimony from 40 people and received 126 letters. It certainly looked like robust community engagement. The Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the variances resulted in a 6-6 tie vote by the Planning Commission. However, one of the votes was by the chair, who likely should not have voted at all except in the instance of a tie.

Had the chair not voted on the motion, the variances would have been denied 6-5. However, the chair went further and voted on the motion a second time, breaking the tie she had created and leading to the variances being approved. Rather than voting again after this illegality was determined, the Planning Commission opted to rely on a statutory provision allowing variance requests that are not considered in a timely fashion to be approved by default.

We must remember that the Planning Commission and BZA are made up of political appointees chosen by way of an extremely opaque selection process. So why would we think these bodies are objective and willing to reach opinions different than those that run City Hall? The St. Andrew's matter now goes to the City Council following the payment by concerned citizens of the \$462 fee required for an appeal. If history is a measure of things to come, those citizens will lose at City Council.

Creating the illusion of citizen engagement and due process is worse than having no process at all. It allows an insular group of hired and appointed personnel to rubber-stamp a City Hall agenda without rigorous debate. It results in ordinary folks wasting time, energy and money on a process that doesn't really exist. The inequities are against us, the common citizens and voters, and nothing will change unless we are willing to challenge the insular oligarchy and the interests that support it.

A former president of the Summit Hill Association, Andrew J. Rorvig is a trial lawyer and member of the steering committee of St. Paul STRONG.



Inbox

Outrageous overreach on Grand

We have been property owners on Grand Avenue for 35 years. We are extremely disappointed and concerned by the St. Paul City Council's recent vote to upzone a property at 770 Grand Ave. that had been zoned Community Business Converted for 30 years. The upzoning means that a building once approved for a light-use residential and commercial mix now is zoned Traditional Neighborhoods 2 (TN2)—an outrageous overreach by the City Council.

TN2 properties are not found anywhere else on this block of Grand. Even worse, this clearly constitutes spot zoning, which is illegal in Minnesota. We are disappointed over our council member's total disregard of the law, the city charter and the neighborhood plan for Summit Hill.

Thanks goes to Jane Prince for being the only City Council member to vote against this spot zoning on Grand. It is unfortunate that the rest of the council, led by Ward 2 member Rebecca Noecker, went the wrong way on this rezoning request and over-zoned a property that does not meet any of the code requirements for TN2.

At this point, it appears that the St. Paul City Charter and the Summit Hill Plan are irrelevant to those in charge of our city. If anyone else would like to get their property up-zoned or spot-zoned, all you need to do is ask. So happy up-zoning to all on Grand. Good-bye to the codes that were adopted by the City Council and meant to preserve the historical character of our neighborhoods.

Dawn Huffman
Macalester-Groveland

Editor's note: The letter writer is a co-owner of rental property on Grand and Lincoln avenues.

Salutations from St. Pothole

It's stunning that our city leaders seem more concerned about a \$2 billion streetcar line on West Seventh Street that will serve a minority of people than basic street resurfacing that benefits our entire city. It's truly shameful that our streets are in this condition while every year our property taxes continue to rise. So many of our streets and alleys are in such poor condition; they just get patched up only to fall apart again.

Now we have a group of people who think we should turn over our alley plowing to the city. How can people think the city will do a better job than our private alley snowplow driver who's so punctual that sometimes he clears our alley days before we ever see our side streets cleared? Being

responsible means fixing the things you already have before you start building something new.

Walter J. Huemmer
Highland Park

Riverview Streetcar Blues

(Sung in the style of Steely Dan's "Deacon Blues.")

It will crawl like a viper
On top of West Seventh Street,
Even slower than the bus
It is designed to unseat.

It will run from sunup to sundown
And be the slowest ride in town,
A streetcar all our own
That will call West Seventh Street home.

So you call them fools,
You say it's a crazy scheme,
But the streetcar's for real
Met Council just bought that dream.

So useless to ask them why,
Just state your piece, then wave goodbye.
It's no different this time.
They're doubling down on the Green Line.

Jerome M. Johnson
Summit Hill

Stop polluting rivers

The Mississippi River is one of the most polluted rivers in the country. It's sometimes called "the most tainted coastal ecosystem in the world." That's an awful thing. Millions of people rely on the Mississippi River for drinking water.

Pollution in rivers can harm or kill animals. A fish or otter or other river animal could find a plastic bag or other piece of trash, think it was food and then choke on it and die. Animals are innocent and don't deserve to choke on trash and die just because some idiot was too lazy to find a trash can to throw their trash away.

There are three main things polluting the river: sewage, trash and toxic chemicals. Sewage and toxic chemicals are bad because they can harm animals like fish and otters and

8 ◀ INBOX

humans. They can also raise the cost of cleaning water because the more sewage and toxic chemicals in the water, the more we have to spend on things that clean them out.

We need to stop polluting the rivers. We are killing river life, polluting our drinking water and turning a beautiful river into a toxic pool.

Adam Griffith
Macalester-Groveland

Editor's note: The writer is a 7th-grader at Friends School of Minnesota.

A word to the wise pedestrian

Amen, amen to Barry Riesch of St. Anthony Park ("Right-of-way isn't always right way," *Villager* Inbox, March 27). I too was taught how to cross the street when I was little. I don't want to put my safety getting across the street in the hands of a stranger. I too have had pedestrians blatantly step in front of my car expecting me to stop in time and not hit them. Four-lane streets are especially hazardous. It's not drivers who need educating on safe street crossing; it's pedestrians.

M'Liss Switzer
Highland Park

Motorists: Take a breather

There is no reason for drivers to run red lights, but I see it every day as I walk through Highland Village. Red-light runners create a hazard for pedestrians. Highland Village is a wonderful neighborhood amenity, and motorists have an obligation to drive calmly through there. Fortunately, the people who are reading this letter do drive carefully. But for the others, can we at least make an effort to get the word out? Stop on red and stay calm.

P.J. O'Toole
Highland Park

True cost of fashion

When people think about fashion, they normally don't think about environmental pollution and unfair labor practices, but this is the harsh reality of the segment of the fashion industry called fast fashion. Consumers of fast fashion throw away the clothes after only wearing them a few times. This is why the fashion industry is responsible for much of the 2.5 billion pounds of clothing that end up in landfills every year.

Clothing companies should be required to make clothes using environmentally friendly materials and to make sure their employees have safe working conditions and fair pay. The fashion industry is responsible for 10 percent of the world's carbon footprint, meaning that fashion is a big contributor to climate change. Many of the materials used to make fast-fashion clothing are harmful to the environment. An example is polyester. This nonbiodegradable material is made from nonrenewable resources and is carbon-intensive, requiring 70 million barrels of oil a year.

In order to make clothes quickly and inexpensively, fast fashion companies in America exploit garment workers overseas, paying them as little as \$1 to \$3 a day. In countries like Bangladesh, fast-fashion workers work long days in unsafe conditions and are paid 18 percent of a living wage.

Fast-fashion companies are focused on the bottom line. They will do anything to convince you to buy more cheap, trendy clothes that fall apart or go out of style quickly. One advantage of fast fashion is that it is inexpensive. Some people can't afford to buy clothing from companies that use fair labor practices and environmentally friendly materials. But if the price of clothes is the concern, buying second-hand is a great alternative. Thrift and consignment stores and online second-hand stores such as eBay are great places to buy clothes without creating more textile waste.

The best way to stop the fast-fashion cycle is to stop buying fast-fashion clothes. Researching clothing designers and brands before buying clothes is a great way to cut fast fashion out of your life. The more people become aware of this issue, the more people are likely to put pressure on lawmakers to create stricter laws surrounding garment production.

The next time you see cheap clothing for sale, question where it came from and what was sacrificed to make it.

Solveig Fellows
Standish, Minneapolis

Editor's note: The writer is an 8th-grader at Friends School of Minnesota.

First impressions of St. Paul

I invite St. Paul City Council member Chris Tolbert, Mayor Melvin Carter and Governor Tim Walz to drive down West Seventh Street south of Montreal Avenue toward the airport. Look at the western edge of the street and fully appreciate the revolting amount of garbage accumulated there. Note all of the trees and tree limbs cut down by the city and just left there in a jumble, making it look like abandoned lots.

This is the gateway to St. Paul, our capital city, from our international airport. It is a shameful example of a city that cares little for the quality of life of everyday citizens.

Jeanne Condon
Highland Park

Serving Minnesota's homeless

Minnesota is now the Land of 10,000 Homeless, which was confirmed by the Wilder Foundation in a recent survey. This may be a small number per capita, but it's significant when you consider it's the size of a small city.

Catholic Charities is doing a marvelous job of addressing the issue and is set to open another 200 rooms and matching shelter beds to go along with the 200 rooms and matching shelter beds it opened in 2017.

Steven Hubbell
Downtown St. Paul

A winter welcome for dogs

I'd like to thank Town and Country Club and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church for opening their grounds and facilities to dog owners in the neighborhood this winter. This gesture went above and beyond to welcome dog owners and reinforce a sense of community. I can't tell you how uplifting it was to see "dogs welcomed here" instead of signs that say "no dogs allowed."

I thank you and my two Labrador retrievers thank you.

Karen Kodzik
Highland Park

VILLAGER

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Maurice F. Mischke, 1920-1991

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theVillagerMN

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Home Improvement

Worth the wait

Snell-Ham redo adds modern elements while keeping charm

BY DAVE PAGE

Brandon and Jenny Glanz grew up in Minnesota and met at the University of Minnesota Duluth. They lived in Florida for a time while Brandon earned his law degree, but returned to Minnesota to be near family and settled in a Minneapolis condo.

Six years ago, they said it “just made sense” to buy a house. Although they liked Minneapolis, St. Paul was closer to their jobs and they said the city just felt “way more comfortable.”

The 1914 Craftsman Cottage-style home they bought at 1457 Portland Ave. had gorgeous woodwork, a recently finished basement family room with gas fireplace, and a newly remodeled laundry room. However, the arrival of twin daughters a few years ago made them rethink their needs. Last spring, they decided to expand and reconfigure their one-and-a-half story home to better accommodate their family.

Jenny’s sister, a big fan of the Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour, thought it would be great for the couple to share their experience with others who were thinking about remodeling. She convinced them to open their home for the 32nd annual tour, which will be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 27-28.

For Jenny, the most glaring deficiency in their home was the lack

of storage space. Almost as soon as they moved in, she had a friend help them remodel the second-floor bathroom. Besides installing new tile and a smaller sink that better fit the cramped space, they managed to add a small cabinet above a radiator to store toiletries.

Next, Jenny wanted to tackle a makeover of the basement bathroom and to get ideas for a new kitchen and master bedroom suite. She met with several contractors and the couple picked JR Structures.

Last April, the couple sat down with company owner Jim Huber to create a work schedule. He and his crew first decreased the size of the basement bathroom to free up space for a new closet. Then they started to open up the kitchen by removing the walls leading to an office/den and dining room.

To replace the office space, Huber recommended adding a two-story addition off the back of the house and expanding the basement below it.

Besides a small office, the addition on the first floor includes a powder room and mudroom, which now serves as the family’s main entry to the house.

The kitchen now boasts a large island topped by two oak countertops. Stained to match the wooden vent hood over the stove, the island holds four stools and a small vegetable sink. A new refrigerator, double oven and dishwasher round out the



Jenny and Brandon Glanz stand in the enlarged kitchen of their Portland Avenue home, which will be part of the 32nd annual Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour on April 27-28. PHOTO BY SCOTT AMUNDSON FOR MSP HOME TOUR

appliances. A lockable beverage cooler is part of a dry bar.

A corner window in the original office now brings plenty of light into the kitchen, and an original door and trim have been repurposed as an entry to the pantry.

The kitchen and dining room now have new maple floors. An oak strip provides an artistic transition between the living room and dining room. The greatly enlarged and remodeled kitchen was completed just before Christmas.

The couple are happiest when friends tell them the kitchen looks as if it was part of the original structure. “That was our goal,” Jenny said.

She was not persuaded by looking at the plans that the second floor of the addition would be large enough for a master suite. “But Jim (Huber) convinced me that it had plenty of

space, and he was right,” she said.

The extra 168 square feet on the second floor, combined with the twins’ original bedroom, now make up the master bedroom suite that includes his-and-hers closets and a master bath.

Huber was able to remove an old brick chimney by venting the basement boiler to the side and replacing a gas water heater with an electric one. That freed up space on the second floor for enlarging a closet in the smallest of the three bedrooms. The original master bedroom will eventually serve as a bedroom for one of the twins.

The house, which had one full bath when it was built, now has two three-quarter baths, one full bath and one half bath. The expanded space in the basement under the addition remains as an unfinished

bonus room.

According to Brandon, committing just last month to be on the tour provided an incentive to get things ready after the nearly year-long project. “It’s been a kick in the butt,” he said. Jenny and representatives from JR Structures will be on hand during the tour to answer questions.

The Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour was created to encourage homeowners to stay in the central cities and improve their residences instead of moving to the suburbs.

Four dozen homes will be open on this year’s free, self-guided tour, which will run from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, April 27, and from 1-5 p.m. Sunday, April 28. Guides are available at metro-area libraries. For details, visit mshometour.com.

Even more places made special by their owners

Other local stops on the 32nd annual Minneapolis & St. Paul Home Tour on April 27-28 include the following:

St. Paul

- 491 Otis Ave. After living in this 1920 home for many years, Chris Carlson and Marla Spivak felt it was time to create a main-level bathroom and update the kitchen. The previous kitchen now serves as a three-

quarter bathroom with crafted storage cabinetry. The music and dining rooms swapped spaces so dining could be located in proximity to the new kitchen addition. The Craftsman character of the home was accentuated in the addition with full-inset cabinets of rift-sawn oak, arched openings, harmonizing colors and a fossil backsplash. A new deck and back door provide a connection to the couple’s gardens.

- 2255 Sargent Ave. By attaching the garage to this 1991 home, Amy Kelly and her family gained a mudroom, butler pantry and ready access to garage storage space. The breezeway makes a practical entrance to the well-defined outdoor living space. Bathroom updates also make the home exactly what the

family ordered.

- 99 Cambridge St. Jack and Marty Rossman wanted to stay in their 1922 Tangletown home designed by architect Herbert Sullwold, who also designed the chapel at St. Catherine. A sunroom and unheated porch were converted into a first-floor bedroom and bath. The second-floor bath was gutted and now features a generous shower and finely detailed tile and cabinets. The living room fireplace has a new energy-efficient gas insert with stone surround.

- 1714 James Ave. A couple purchased this 1919 Arts & Crafts home in 1993 and raised their three children, sharing one shower and a half bath for 23 years. They since decided to do a major renovation that would create

individual spaces for eating, entertaining and enjoying their growing family. They added to the back to allow for more cooks in the kitchen and a family-centered space. A guest bedroom and another shower were added below the new addition.

- 1467 Iglehart Ave. Once the home of Scottish-born plasterer George Pilmer, this 1916 Cottage house is “a folk-art stucco fantasia” in the words of historian Larry Millet. From the mid-1970s through the 2000s, Pilmer methodically transformed the formerly pedestrian one-bedroom home into a “whimsical, tiny stucco cathedral,” combining many different styles. Outfitted in

MSP HOME TOUR ► 11

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Home & Garden Clippings

Friends of the Parks and Trails of St. Paul and Ramsey County is taking orders through April 19 for its annual sale of trees, shrubs, vines and roses. Included in the sale are the usual favorites, as well as blueberries, currants, plum, redbud, maple, elm, blue spruce, lilac, hydrangea, clematis, mock orange and other varieties. The public can purchase plants for themselves or donate one as a gift that will be planted in a local park. Order online at shop.friendsoftheparks.org/annual-tree-sale. Orders will be available for pickup from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, May 4, in Maplewood.

Ramsey County's compost sites are now operating during extended hours. The sites may be accessed for free by county residents from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays; 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturdays; and 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays. The sites are closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The county operates seven compost sites, including one at 870 Pleasant Ave. Visit ramseycounty.us/residents/recycling-waste/collection-sites.

The Twin Cities Bungalow Club will hold its annual home tour on Saturday, May 11. Local owners of bungalows and other early 20th-century houses are invited to include their home on the 2019 tour and let other home-

owners benefit from their home improvement ideas. Contact the club at mail@bungalowclub.net or call 612-724-5816.

Spring Cleanup Day will be held from 8 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 4, at Mendakota Park, 2171 Dodd Road, Mendota Heights. Residents of Mendota Heights, Mendota, Lilydale and Sunfish Lake are invited to dispose of their broken and unwanted items. Proof of address is required. The cost is \$6 per carload, \$9 for SUVs/minivans, \$13 for pickups and \$24 for trailers. There are additional costs for mattresses and box springs, appliances, tires and electronics. Visit tinyurl.com/y4ocls5j.

The Tree Trust is partnering with the city of Mendota Heights to offer trees at a discounted rate to residents. Available trees include Hackberry, Kentucky Coffeetree, Swamp White Oak, Cathedral Elm and Sentry Linden. They cost \$45 each and will range in size from 4-6 feet tall. Trees will be available for pickup from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 18. Pre-ordering is required and can be done by visiting treetrust.org/get-a-tree/mendotaheights. Those who prefer to pay by check can order by mail. Contact Tree Trust's forestry department for information at 952-767-3886.



Jack and Marty Rossman will show off their remodeled 1922 home on Cambridge Street during this month's tour. PHOTO BY SCOTT AMUNDSON FOR MSP HOME TOUR

10 MSP HOME TOUR

Jetson's-era decor, the house is now a quiet, short-term rental in steady demand. Owner Susannah Dodge is hoping that people who knew Pilmer might get in touch, since she wants to piece together a history to honor his legacy.

- 1530 W. Seventh St. Skylark Dry Cleaning's new facility is an adaptive reuse of a former garage. The dilapidated building proved to be an ideal size and location for the plant, offices and retail store. Skylark subdivided the property for the Animal Emergency vet clinic next door. At 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 27, during the home tour, Rosemary McMonigal will speak on the "Clean & Green" approach to the project, with a tour of the plant and time for questions.

- 941 W. Seventh St. Twenty-three years ago, Nance Derby purchased this mixed-use commercial building with a residence upstairs to accommodate her desire for a live/work space. She gradually brought the building back from neglect, living in various parts of it as the work progressed. The downstairs commercial space now serves her two businesses: Acme Scenic Arts and Artista Bottega.

- 212 S. Colborne St. Darren Tobolt and Wendy Underwood bought this 1882 Victorian home built by Charles Lauer knowing they were to be its stewards. It had been painstakingly restored by the time they bought it, but they added interior and exterior entry points to improve the flow throughout the first floor, and built a two-story porch. The second floor has been

restored to resemble the first floor with original stained-glass windows, hardwood floors and stunning fixtures.

- 256 Goodrich Ave. Becky and John Yust purchased this 1874 Italianate home in 1974 from the granddaughter of the builder. The family had not done any major upgrades since the 1930s, so they knew they would be taking on several projects. They finally completed the last of them—the two porches. The front porch includes a new roof, columns, turned spindles, stone piers and a rebuilt base. The back porch was rebuilt using the original columns and spindles, and has new steps and hand-wrought railings.

- 639 Portland Ave. This 1884 home was in terrible condition when Keith and Shawn Leetz bought it and they have been slowly nursing it back to its original grandeur. They now have a fantastic kitchen for entertaining, a grand staircase in the foyer, and a light and airy master bedroom suite. They added a main-floor bath, laundry and mudroom, and have repurposed as much of the original home as possible.

Minneapolis

- 3537 37th Ave. S. Stephanie and Ross Erickson built an accessory dwelling unit to gain additional living space without needing to touch the main house. The space will be used as a getaway for rest, relaxation and gaming. It has its own heating and cooling system, kitchen, bathroom and sleeping space, all above a new two-stall garage. Other amenities include natural wood paneling and skylights in the vaulted living room, and an open floor plan.



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District Council News

Highland Park

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Annual meeting—The Highland District Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 10, at Highland Park Middle School, 975 S. Snelling Ave. Board members will be elected to all 12 grid areas based on recently redrawn boundaries. Board members from odd-numbered grids will serve a two-year term ending in April 2021, while those from even-numbered grids will serve a one-year term ending in April 2020. For more information, see the HDC website.

Garage Fest—Registration will open on April 24 for the 2019 Highland Park Garage Fest that will take place on Friday and Saturday, May 31-June 1. The \$15 registration fee covers the cost of promoting the sale, a garage sale sign and a map of all sale locations and items. Visit the HDC website for details.

Tour de Highland—Registration is now open for the 2019 Tour de Highland on Saturday, May 18. Participants may take part in a 10- or 20-mile bike ride either on their own or with a guide. There will also be a guided walk to learn more about the history of Highland Park. Visit the website for more information or to register.

Macalester-Groveland

macgrove.org • 651-695-4000

Neighborhood gathering—The Macalester-Groveland Community Council will hold its annual meeting and board elections from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Thursday, April 11, in the Smail Gallery at Macalester College. During the meeting, Mayor Melvin Carter will give a brief introduction, City Council members Mitra Jalali Nelson and Chris Tolbert will share their plans for the city, and chief resilience officer Russ Stark will give a presentation on the city's Climate Action Resiliency Plan. Elections will be held for all odd-numbered grids and two at-large seats on the board of directors. For information on running for the board, email mgcc@macgrove.org or stop by the office in the Edgcombe Recreation Center from 3-6 p.m. Mondays or noon-3 p.m. Thursdays.

Mac-Grove mini-grants—The community council is hoping to award two to four mini-grants this year to increase involvement in activities that benefit the neighborhood. Applications are due by April 29. Visit macgrove.org/minigrants.

Ward 4 renter summit—Ward 4 City Council member Mitra Jalali Nelson and five of the city's district councils, including Macalester-Groveland, will hold a free renter summit from 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, April 18, in Room 111 of the Anderson Center at Hamline University. Renters can learn about resources, meet district council staff and neighbors, and find new ways to make their voices heard in St. Paul. For information, email ward4@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Garden Fest—Garden Fest will be held from 9 a.m.-noon Saturday, May 11, outside the Edgcombe Recreation Center, 320 S. Griggs St. Representatives from A Backyard Farm will

be on hand to talk about gardening in small spaces. There will also be a plant share, seed swap, Ask a Master Gardener and flower planting activities for children. In case of rain, the event will move to the rec center's gym. For more information, visit macgrove.org/what-we-do/gardenfest.

Call for artists—The community council has received a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council for the 2019 Mac-Grove Fest on September 7, and is looking for talented people to participate in the event. Stage performers, art exhibitors and others with creative ideas are asked to contact the council at macgrove.org/what-we-do/macgrovefest.

Get involved—The Macalester-Groveland board has three standing committees that meet once a month. Those who attend three consecutive committee meetings can become voting members. For more information, visit macgrove.org/committees.

Upcoming meetings—Community Building Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 8, Edgcombe Recreation Center; annual meeting and elections, 6:30 p.m. Thursday, April 11, Smail Gallery at Macalester College; Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 22, Edgcombe; and Housing and Land Use Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, Groveland Recreation Center.

Union Park

unionparkdc.org • 651-645-6887

Union Park micro-grants—Residents of Union Park, either individually or in groups, are being invited to apply for grants of \$200-\$600 to complete improvement projects in the neighborhood. Applicants are also being encouraged to form partnerships with neighborhood businesses and organizations. The application deadline is May 15. Visit unionparkdc.org/micro-grant.

Renter voice summit—The St. Paul City Council's Ward 4 office is partnering with local district councils to help renters get engaged, learn more about their rights and make an impact in the city during a renter summit from 6:30-8 p.m. Thursday, April 18, in Room 111 of the Anderson Center at Hamline University. Renters can learn about resources, meet Ward 4 and district council staff members, visit with neighbors and find new ways to make their voices heard.

Upcoming meetings—Land Use and Economic Development Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 15, 1821 University Ave., Suite 330; Environment and Parks Committee, 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 17, Merriam Park Recreation Center, 2000 St. Anthony Ave.; board of directors, 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 1, Otto Hall at Episcopal Homes, 1860 University Ave.; and Transportation Committee, 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 13, Room 127 at 1821 University Ave.

Stay in touch—The public is invited to "like" the Union Park District Council on Facebook, follow it on Twitter @UnionParkDC and subscribe to its e-newsletter, "Neighborhood Matters," by emailing info@unionparkdc.org.

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Groundbreaking is expected to take place soon on Sibley's new multipurpose field.

Lighted field should be ready for football this fall at Sibley

BY KEVIN DRISCOLL

At the last of four construction preview open houses held in March, spokespeople were excited to relate all the changes going on in the West St. Paul-Mendota Heights-Eagan Area Schools, particularly at Sibley High School, as a result of the \$117 million referendum that was approved by voters last May.

About \$47 million of that money will pay for several projects at Sibley, not the least of which is a new lighted field that will be used for football, soccer and lacrosse, with a new nine-lane track ringing the perimeter. The field will have artificial turf, an electronic scoreboard, bleachers and a concession/restroom building. "There'll also be new locker rooms and a new public address system," said Jennifer Anderson-Tuttle of LSE Architects.

The field will be illuminated with LED bulbs that will be mounted about 10 feet higher than standard field lighting, said Mark Fortman, director of district operations. "They need to be higher because LED lights don't flood areas with light; they're focused on a given area," he said.

The school's tennis courts and baseball fields will be upgraded with new surfaces and dugouts, respectively. Groundbreaking for the new field will be sometime in April, "depending on the weather," Fortman said.

The field is due to be finished by August 15. Sibley's varsity football games will be played there instead of at Matson Field near Heritage Middle School in West St. Paul. Fortman said Matson "will be repurposed to accommodate a wider variety" of the district's athletic needs.

Sibley's current gym will be transformed into a new multiuse athletic facility with adjacent fitness rooms. The high school will also get a new pool to replace the one at Heritage. The pool will be located in a detached facility across a parking lot from Sibley's current gym.

Community Education will administer the pool schedule and operations, and the high school will get priority for its use.

Sibley will also see improvements in its performing arts, music and science areas, according to curriculum and instruction director Cari Jo Drewitz. That includes a new black box theater seating about 75 people, new lighting and other enhancements to the school auditorium, and new small group break-out spaces and repurposed existing meeting and office space.

There will also be new musical instrument storage facilities, several practice rooms and small performance spaces.

The science wing will see 13 small class spaces converted to nine larger classrooms with exhaust hoods, chemical storage, disabilities-compliant lab stations and modern equipment, Drewitz said.

Fortman was particularly proud of the fact that, besides the new athletic field, all interior and exterior lighting in the district will be upgraded to LED bulbs to save energy.

That feature will help highlight interior and exterior building improvements at Sibley, including the high school's parking lots, landscaping, sidewalks, drainage, fencing, doors, elevator, flooring, piping, plumbing, heating, ventilation and air conditioning. New unisex bathrooms will also be added.

Interior construction at Sibley is set to begin on June 10 after school lets out for the summer. Portions will be finished at different times over the next three years. The first to be finished will be the music and science wings on December 21. The art, family and consumer science areas will open in early 2020.

Improvements at Garlough, Moreland and Pilot Knob elementary school and Friendly Hills Middle School also will begin this year. Improvements to Mendota and Somerset elementary schools and Heritage Middle School will start next year.

West 7th Federation may expand board of directors with three seats for renters

BY JANE McCLURE

To encourage a more diverse membership, the West Seventh/Fort Road Federation is considering expanding its board from 11 to 14 directors with the addition of a seat for renters in each of the district's sub-areas. The measure is one of several proposed bylaw changes that will be put to a vote at the federation's annual meeting on Wednesday, April 17.

The annual meeting will run from 6-8:30 p.m. at Summit Brewing Company, 910 Montreal Circle. Anyone age 16 or older who lives or owns property or a business in the West End and attends the meeting is eligible to vote.

"We're looking at ways to get more participation and more diverse participation," said Dana DeMaster, the federation's incoming president. "Changing the bylaws is one way of doing that."

The West End neighborhood is divided into three sub-areas. Each sub-area has had

two representatives or area coordinators on the federation's board for many years. One bylaw change would increase that number to three and specify that the third seat be filled by a renter. Another change would increase the term for board members from one to two years. Board members would be limited to three two-year terms, and the terms of the board's five officers would be staggered.

The federation is also considering establishing new standing committees in the areas of development and fundraising, community outreach, and transportation and land use. The West Seventh Federation is one of the few district councils in the city with no standing committees. The new committees would draw their membership from the board and the district at large—another way to encourage more people to get involved, according to DeMaster.

The changes, if approved by a majority of voters on April 17, will take effect prior to the board elections at the 2020 annual meeting.

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Good Friday: 7:00pm Tenebrae service featuring special music by Gibbons, Lotti, and Willan



Easter Sunday: 10:00am service with special music by Finzi and Gibbons, and featuring Patrick's Hawes' Quanta Qualia with the MPUC Chancel Choir and St. Paul Festival Brass Ensemble. Join in our Hallelujah Chorus congregational sing-along!

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Good Friday - April 19, 7:00 PM Contemplative Music & Meditation

EASTER SUNDAY
Easter Day - April 21, 8:30 & 11:00 AM Holy Communion, brass, Preaching: Rev. Dr. Curtiss DeYoung, CEO, Minnesota Council of Churches

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Sunday Morning Worship 8:30 & 11

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7 pm Tenebrae Worship

Easter Sunday - Apr. 21
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 7:30 am EF Latin Low Mass
 8:30 am Mass in English
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Holy Week 2019

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10 a.m. Worship

Maundy Thursday | April 18
Noon Worship and Holy Communion
7 p.m. Holy Communion and the Office of the Tenebrae featuring Healey Willan's *Tenebrae Responses*
The Motet Choir, Matthew Culloton, conductor

Good Friday | April 19
Noon Worship in Chapel
7 p.m. Vespers: Maurice Duruflé's *Requiem* and the Bach Chamber Players
Krista Costin, alto; Aaron David Miller, organ
Matthew Culloton, conductor

Easter Sunday | April 21
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Commission supports plan to use Summit-U church as event center

BY JANE McCLURE

The former Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church is one step closer to becoming a center for weddings and other events following the St. Paul Planning Commission's recommendation of a historic use variance on April 5. The City Council must still approve the variance, but no date for council action has been set.

City staff recommended approval of the variance, as did the city's Heritage Preservation Commission. The sandstone building, which was designed by architect Cass Gilbert and dedicated in 1888, is located at 217 N. Mackubin St. in the Historic Hill District.

Prospective owner Mohammed Thabet originally sought a conditional use permit to convert the church to an event center. He later decided to seek a historic use variance instead. Such a variance does not require a consent petition signed by neighbors.

Thabet also plans to use part of the building as an adult and child daycare, and add a residential dwelling. Those uses are allowed under the current residential zoning, but weddings and events are not.

No one appeared at a March 28 meeting of the Planning Commission's Zoning Committee to object, but 10 people sent letters to the commission in opposition. Some neighbors and members of the Summit Avenue Residential Preservation Association contend that an event center is an incompatible use in a residential neighborhood and historic district.

In a letter to the commission, longtime Ramsey Hill resident and developer Kit Richardson wrote that the city zoning code states that "this district is not intended for

more intensive uses such as conference centers, retreat centers and reception houses."

Some immediate neighbors are worried that the center will create additional traffic and parking pressures. "The impact of such a use will be devastating to the residential character of the immediate area," wrote Mackubin Street residents Gregory and Susan Hotzler and Dayton Avenue resident Michelle Hotzler. "We already have an extreme problem with parking and congestion."

A variance allows a property owner to repurpose a structure for a past or historic use, though conditions may be imposed to regulate such things as parking and hours of operation. The only condition being placed on the former church is that final site plan be in substantial compliance with the plan submitted to the Planning Commission.

Dayton Avenue Presbyterian Church held its last service in the building in December 2018 after its membership had dwindled to just a few dozen people. The congregation and almost all of the programs and groups it sponsored have since moved elsewhere.

The church at maximum capacity could hold 450 people. The new event center would hold up to 350. The property has 34 parking spaces. Thabet has said he needs to book one event per weekend to make the center viable.

Real estate broker Matt Ditzler said the congregation had hoped to sell the property to another church, but that the proposed new use was seen as a good fit. He said the building will need some work before the event center can open, most of it on the interior. The exterior only needs some minor repairs.



Celebrate Holy Week

Palm Sunday
April 14, 10:30 a.m.

Easter Triduum

Holy Thursday
April 18, 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday
April 19, 7:30 p.m.

Easter Vigil
April 20, 8:00 p.m.



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- ◆ **Good Friday, April 19** + 7:00 p.m. Liturgy of Good Friday and Adoration of the Cross
- ◆ **The Great Vigil of Easter, April 20** + 7:00 p.m.; Festive Reception to follow;
- ◆ **Easter Sunday, April 21** + 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. with Organ, Bells, Choir and Brass; community pick-up choir of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*; music of Daniel Pinkham, William Braun, and Martin Luther

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Easter Services at Area Churches

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Holy Spirit: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 8:00 pm. Easter Masses 8:30 & 10:30 am.

Lumen Christi: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 8:00 pm. Easter Sunday 8:30 & 10:30 am.

Nativity of Our Lord: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 7:30 pm. Easter Masses 7:00, 8:15, 9:30 & 11:00 am. No 5:00 pm.

St. Francis de Sales/St. James: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 8:00 pm. @ St. Francis Easter Sunday 9:30 am. @ St. Francis 11:30 am. Spanish Mass @ St. Francis

St. Mark's: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 9:00 pm. Easter Masses 9:00 & 11:00 am.

St. Peter of Mendota Easter Vigil (Sat.) 8:30 pm. Easter Sunday Masses at 9:00 & 11 am.

St. Thomas More: Easter Vigil (Sat.) 8:00 pm. Easter Masses 8:00 & 10:30 am.

EPISCOPAL

St. Mary's Episcopal: Children's Easter Vigil (Sat.) 4:00 pm. Easter Sunday Services at 7:45, 9:00 & 11:00 am.

LUTHERAN

Gloria Dei Lutheran: Children's Vigil 5:00 pm. Easter Vigil (Sat.) 7:00 pm. Easter Sunday Holy Communion at 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00 am.

Immanuel Lutheran Easter Vigil (Sat.) 6:00 pm. Easter Sunday Worship at 8:00 & 10:30 am. Easter Sunday Breakfast 9:00-10:30 am.



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Athena Awards mark 25th year of recognizing St. Paul's best female athletes

Forty-three young women representing St. Paul public and private high schools will be honored for excellence in athletics and academics during the 25th annual Athena Awards ceremony on April 24. The local winners are:

Iyanna Hutchinson Central

Sports: golf (5-time letter winner, 5-time all-conference, honorable mention, 3-time all state, 2nd in sections two years in a row); volleyball (letter winner).

Other activities: volunteer at the Jimmy Lee Recreation Center helping kids after school.

Scholastic achievements: Creative Writers Award, A & B honor rolls.

Post-high school plans: attend college and play golf.

Frannie Hottinger Cretin-Derham Hall

Sports: basketball (4-time letter winner, 3-time all-conference, honorable mention, all-state, all-time school scoring leader (1,880-plus points), single-game scoring record (51 points), captain, state consolation, all-tournament and all-state teams, Rookie of the Year and MVP, East Metro Player of the year fi-



Iyanna Hutchinson



Frannie Hottinger



Tori Nelson



Sophia Haley



Bailey Donovan



Sophie Kishish

nalist, second-highest scorer in state for 2018-19 season, Ms. Basketball finalist); soccer (4-time letter winner, 2-time honorable mention, captain, most improved player).

Other activities: student council, National Honor Society, blood drive chair, People Finding People, Eastside Learning Center, Food for Hogs, Feed My Starving Children, ARC Village, Empty Bowls, Life-works.

Scholastic achievements: dean's list every trimester, 4.2 GPA, Christian Brothers Award, Excel Award, student of trimester for AP Stats.

Post-high school plans: attend Division I Lehigh University on a full basketball scholarship.

Tori Nelson Henry Sibley

Sports: basketball (5-time letter winner, 5-time all-conference, 5-time MVP, all-section team, 3-time captain, all-time leading scorer (2,000-plus points), all-time leading rebounder (1,000-plus), all-time blocks and steals, single-game

scoring record (51 points), all-star game participant, Ms. Basketball nominee); softball (4-time letter winner, 2-time honorable mention, captain, 2-time defensive player of year); cross-country (letter winner).

Other activities: National Honor Society, Link Crew, School Age Care volunteer, youth softball clinic volunteer, youth basketball camps.

Scholastic achievements: all-state, 3-time academic letter winner, Spotlight on Scholarship winner.

Post-high school plans: attend South Dakota State and play basketball.

Sophia Haley Highland Park

Sports: golf (5-time letter winner, 4-time all-conference, honorable mention, 3rd in conference meet); tennis (2 years varsity, letter winner, most improved, all-state academic); Nordic skiing (5 years JV, letter winner, 5th in JV conference meet, varsity Rennet Team winner).

Other activities: yearbook editor, National Honor Society, Minnesota

Twins Tour and Education Program, volunteer race official, First Tee youth golf program.

Scholastic achievements: Tennis All-State Academic, top 20 in class.

Post-high school plans: attend a four-year university.

Bailey Donovan St. Paul Academy

Sports: skiing (6-time letter winner, 6-time all-conference, 4-time all-state, conference team and individual champion, section champion, 4-time state participant, fifth place individual and team in 2019, Welch Village 44th Invitational champion, 2-time MVP, Rookie of the Year, conference athlete of the month); soccer (3-time letter winner, section champion team, state soccer participant).

Other activities: PLAY Club, freshmen mentor, church volunteer, Buck Hill Ski Swap.

Scholastic achievements: 4-time Honor Roll, Spartan of the Month.

Post-high school plans: attend college on the East Coast.

Sophie Kishish Visitation

Sports: swimming (5-time letter winner, 5-time all-conference, 11 all-state awards, 2-time captain, 5-time state team champion, at this year's meet was 2nd in 400 free relay, 4th in 200 free relay, 4th in 500 free and 6th in 200 free).

Other activities: Life Club, Woodbury Options for Women, Meals on Wheels, Feed My Starving Children.

Scholastic achievements: honor roll.

Post-high school plans: attend St. Louis University and swim.

The St. Paul Athena Awards luncheon will take place from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, at Vadnais Heights Commons, 655 E. County Road F. The keynote speaker will be Laura Bush, executive director of North Country Region USA Volleyball.

For tickets and reservations, call Sara Paul at 651-338-1302 or visit stpaulathena.com.

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Thursday/April 11

“THE ONES THAT GOT AWAY,” a talk on the homes and buildings associated with F. Scott Fitzgerald that have been torn down, will be presented by Fitzgerald scholar David Page at 7:45 p.m. at Waldmann Brewery & Wurstery, 445 N. Smith Ave. Admission is free, but reservations requested. Call 651-222-0701 or visit rchs.com.

Friday/April 12

MODERN APPRENTICESHIP: The Other Four-Year Degree, a symposium on the failings of America’s college-for-all model and the promise of Germany’s apprenticeship model, will be held from 6-9 p.m. at the Germanic American Institute, 301 Summit Ave. The program brings together leaders of business and industry, policymakers, educational institutions and families. Admission is free. Visit gai-mn.org.

Saturday/April 13

INVENTING FREEDOM, the history of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution and the rule of law, will be addressed at a meeting of Metro Republican Women at 9 a.m. at the Mendakota Country Club, 2075 Mendakota Drive in Mendota Heights. Janet Beihoffer, Republican National Committeewoman for Minnesota, will speak. The meeting will open with a buffet breakfast at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$25 for non-members, \$15 for students. Walk-ins are welcome, but reservations are encouraged. Visit metrogopwomen.org.

Sunday/April 14

A PANCAKE BREAKFAST and koláče and craft sale will be presented by Sokol Minnesota from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the CSPA Hall, 383 Michigan St. The cost of breakfast is \$8, \$6 for children under age 9, or \$26 for a family of four. To pre-order koláče, the Czech pastry, call 651-290-0542.

THE GARDEN OF THE RIGHTEOUS, a program of Yiddish music and the stories of six who risked their lives to save people during the Jewish Holocaust of World War



Meet the maker. Mousework Glass proprietor Angela Fredrickson surrounded herself with her sculptural creations at the first Grand Makers Market held on March 30 in Grand Avenue’s Victoria Crossing West Mall. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

II, will be presented from 10-11:30 a.m. at the St. Paul Talmud Torah, 768 S. Hamline Ave. Sponsored by Or Emet, the program will feature Judith Eisner and the Naye Strunes Klezmer Quartet. Admission is by donation with \$10 suggested. All proceeds will go to Doctors Without Borders.

EUROPEAN POPULISM and immigration will be addressed in a Great Decisions program at 1:30 p.m. at the Waters of Highland Park, 678 S. Snelling Ave. Free and open to all, the one-hour program will include a 20-minute film followed by discussion. Call 651-363-3040.

JEWISH COMMUNITY ACTION will hold a Freedom Seder from 2-5 p.m. at Mount Zion Temple, 1300 Summit Ave. The program will weave together stories of past struggles for social justice with a discussion of immigrant rights, housing equity and criminal justice. Admission is by donation with \$36 suggested. A light Passover meal will be served. Child care will be available. For reservations, visit jewishcommunityaction.org.

Monday/April 15

NATURAL IMAGES, a presentation on garden photography by John Maciejny, retired biology teacher and professional photographer, will be featured at a meeting of the Garden Club of Ramsey County at 7:30 p.m. at St. Luke’s Lutheran Church, 1807 Field Ave. New members are welcome. Visit ramseygardeners.org.

Wednesday/April 17

“STORIES IN STONE,” a presentation on the hand-carved headstones that were popular in cemeteries in the Victorian era, will be offered by photographer and researcher Janice Quick in a free Ramsey County Historical Society program at noon in Landmark Center. Quick will discuss how the headstones reflect the lives and times of the persons memorialized.

Thursday/April 18

PREVENTING THE ABUSE and financial

exploitation of seniors will be discussed by Katie Behrens of the Minnesota Elder Justice Center from 2-3 p.m. in the auditorium of the Shaller Family Shalom East, 740 Kay Ave. Admission is free and open to all. Refreshments will be served. For reservations, call 651-328-2117.

A FREE SOUP SUPPER will be served from 5:30-7 p.m. at Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church, 3430 E. 51st St. in Minneapolis. Soup, bread and cookies will be served. A Maundy Thursday service will follow. Call 612-729-5463.

Saturday/April 20

CELEBRATE EARTH DAY. Volunteer to clean up the River Gorge from 9:30 a.m.-noon along West River Parkway near 36th or 44th streets in Minneapolis. All supplies will be provided, but bring gloves if you have them. Sturdy shoes are recommended. For information, contact Amy Kilgore at 651-222-2193 ext. 31 or akilgore@fmr.org.

AN EASTER EGG HUNT and Festival will be held at 10 a.m., rain or shine, at Trinity City Church, 1849 Marshall Ave. Come hunt for eggs and then enjoy games, crafts, refreshments and more. Admission is free.

Tuesday/April 23

THE TUESDAY HIGHLAND NINERS will tee up their 45th golf season with a general meeting for new and returning members at 10 a.m. at the Highland National clubhouse, 1403 Montreal Ave. The league play starts on May 7. Annual dues are \$50. Call Louise at 612-518-6492.

Wednesday/April 24

THE HIGHLAND 9 Monday Senior Golf League will begin its season with a meeting for new and returning members at 10 a.m. at the Highland National clubhouse, 1403 Montreal Ave. Open to men and women age 55 and older, the league plays from 7:30-9 a.m. Mondays, May 6 through September 23, at the Highland 9-Hole Golf Course. Annual dues are \$25. For information, call Steve Borries at 612-360-7925.



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Crime Report

The following crime incidents were compiled from St. Paul and Mendota Heights police department reports and other sources.

Highland Park

Burglary—Numerous items were stolen from the underground parking lot of an apartment building on the 1700 block of Graham Avenue between March 17-21.

Theft—A purse, keys and headphones were stolen from a vehicle at Crosby Farm Park between 5-7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 23.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 1500 block of St. Paul Avenue at 3:45 p.m. Friday, March 29. It was later found to have been involved in a hit-and-run accident.

—A wallet with \$1,500 in cash was stolen from a vehicle on the 2200 block of West Seventh Street around 8 p.m. Saturday, March 30.

—A television was stolen and a vending machine was damaged at 7th Street Laundry, 2346 W. Seventh St., around 1:30 p.m. Saturday, March 30.

—A motorized bicycle was stolen from an apartment building at 1575 St. Paul Ave. between 7-10 p.m. Saturday, March 30. Criminal damage to property also was reported at that same address the following day.

Miscellaneous—Several walls and windows were sprayed with graffiti at the BP Station, 2526 W. Seventh St., during the evening of March 21-22.

Lexington-Hamline

Burglary—A 21-year-old man was arrested for possession of burglary tools after he was found cutting locks off of merchandise at the Midway Target at 4:53 p.m. Friday, March 29.

Theft—A 36-year-old man was arrested for tampering with a motor vehicle after he was seen trying to open doors on multiple vehicles and then getting in one at the Midway Target at 3:09 p.m. Friday, March 22.

—A juvenile was arrested on warrants for theft and felony terroristic threats at Central High School at 9:39 a.m. Tuesday, March 26.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 1200 block of St. Anthony Avenue at 1:46 p.m. Monday, March 18.

Assault—A 30-year-old man was arrested for punching a stranger in the face at the Midway Target at 9:40 p.m. Monday, March 25. The suspect had fled by the time police arrived, but he was later found at the nearby Walmart.

Weapons—A male suspect waved a hand-

gun at a man during a road rage incident on Lexington Parkway and University Avenue at 2:49 p.m. Friday, March 22.

Macalester-Groveland

Burglary—A vacant home was burglarized on the 1200 block of St. Clair Avenue at 10:21 p.m. Sunday, March 24.

Theft—A laptop computer was stolen on the 400 block of South Snelling Avenue between 2-8 a.m. Saturday, March 16.

—A Macbook computer, purse, credit cards and sunglasses were stolen from a vehicle on the 1200 block of Grand Avenue at 9:01 p.m. Monday, March 18.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 400 block of South Saratoga Street at 6:50 a.m. Tuesday, March 26.

—A backpack with a laptop computer, wallet and other items was stolen from a vehicle on Summit Avenue and Finn Street between 2:30-5:15 p.m. Wednesday, March 27.

—A MacBook Air computer and iPad Mini were stolen on the 1500 block of Grand Avenue on Sunday, March 31.

Assault—A jogger was hit with a paintball by someone shooting from a black SUV on Cleveland and Sargent avenues at 6:21 p.m. Thursday, March 28.

Mendota Heights

Theft—A purse and bank cards were reported stolen from a vehicle on the 1000 block of Lilydale Road at 9:08 a.m. Wednesday, March 20.

—A purse was reported stolen from a vehicle on the 700 block of Main Street at 6:22 p.m. Sunday, March 24.

Merriam Park

Burglary—A handgun was stolen from a garage on the 1800 block of Carroll Avenue between March 28-30.

—Play It Again Sports, 145 N. Snelling Ave., was broken into and cash was reported stolen at 5:54 a.m. Friday, March 29.

Theft—The catalytic converter was stolen from a vehicle on the 1600 block of St. Anthony Avenue between 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday, March 19.

—A suspect stole a cellphone off the counter of a business while its owner was outside at 10:48 a.m. Friday, March 22, on the 1700 block of Selby Avenue.

—A laptop computer was stolen from a vehicle on the 1700 block of Dayton Avenue at

12:05 a.m. Friday, March 22.

—A vehicle was reported stolen on the 500 block of Eustis Street at 10:06 a.m. Sunday, March 24.

—Five rolls of copper wire were reported stolen from the 1900 block of Marshall Avenue at 8:10 a.m. Monday, March 25.

Snelling-Hamline

Burglary—A safe was stolen from Le Nails, 1466 University Ave., during the evening of March 28-29.

Theft—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 1400 block of Carroll Avenue on March 23 and on the 1400 block of Marshall Avenue on March 30.

—A cellphone and purse were stolen on Hamline and University avenues around 1:50 p.m. Thursday, March 28.

—Officers identified and released six boys for trying to steal food and drinks at Lee-ann Chin, 1360 University Ave., at 5:55 p.m. Sunday, March 31.

Summit Hill

Burglary—An apartment was broken into on the 300 block of Grand Avenue between March 19-22.

Theft—Tools were stolen from a vehicle on the 600 block of Grand Avenue between 8-8:20 a.m. Thursday, March 7.

—Vehicles were reported stolen on the 900 block of Grand Avenue on March 24, on Summit Court near Summit Lane on March 30, and on Dunlap Street and Lincoln Avenue on March 28.

—A laptop computer and Bluetooth speaker were stolen from a vehicle parked behind Victoria Crossing West, 867 Grand Ave., between 8-10:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 27.

—Two backpacks containing wallets, cellphones and keys were stolen from a truck on St. Albans Street south of Summit Avenue at 10:10 a.m. Thursday, March 28. The suspects fled in a silver Toyota Tundra.

—A bicycle valued at more than \$1,000 was stolen on the 1000 block of St. Clair Avenue during the evening of March 29-30.

Summit-University

Burglary—Storage lockers were broken into at an apartment building on the 500 block of Summit Avenue between 8 a.m.-6:06 p.m. Monday, March 25.

—A Piece of Cake, 485 Selby Ave., was broken into and cash was reported stolen at 6:21

a.m. Friday, March 29.

Theft—Tools and a toolbox valued at more than \$1,000 were stolen from a vehicle on Kent Street near Ashland Avenue on March 18-19.

—A MacBook computer was reported stolen on the 500 block of Selby Avenue at 3:48 p.m. Saturday, March 23.

—Two wheels were stolen from a vehicle on the 400 block of Marshall Avenue between 1-2 a.m. Monday, March 25.

—A cellphone was stolen from a vehicle on the 900 block of Marshall Avenue between 8-9 a.m. Thursday, March 28.

—A vehicle was stolen on the 700 block of Dayton Avenue at 2:02 a.m. Thursday, March 28. The victim saw a male get into the vehicle and take off north on Grotto Street.

Sex crime—Rapes were reported on the 800 block of Hague Avenue at 12:22 p.m. Friday, March 15, and on the 1000 block of Portland Avenue at 10:37 a.m. Tuesday, March 26.

Assault—A female struck her boyfriend three times in the head with a metal cooking pot in an apartment on the 200 block of Virginia Street at 8:18 p.m. Sunday, March 24. The woman left before police arrived.

West End

Robbery—A victim was robbed at gunpoint while attempting to sell several items to the suspect at 4:42 p.m. Sunday, March 24, at the Palace Recreation Center, 781 Palace Ave.

—A robbery at gunpoint was reported at an apartment on the 900 block of West Seventh Street at 10:15 a.m. Friday, March 29.

Theft—A 31-year-old man was arrested for auto theft and drug possession on the 600 block of Canton Street at 8:20 a.m. Saturday, March 23. A second man in the stolen vehicle also was arrested for drug possession.

—A Trek bicycle valued at more than \$500 was stolen from where it was locked to a light post on the 600 block of West Seventh Street between March 28-29.

Sex crime—A rape was reported on the 300 block of North Smith Avenue at 2 p.m. Monday, March 18.

Assault—A 27-year-old man was arrested for felony assault at 11:30 a.m. Friday, March 22, at United Hospital.

—A female suffered minor injuries after being assaulted by a male at the Montreal Hi-Rise, 1085 Montreal Ave., at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 29.

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Birch's branches out to St. Paul's Lowertown

When it comes to ambiance, Birch's Lowertown has something for just about everyone. The brewery and taproom at 289 E. Fifth St. is open and airy with large communal tables, but it can be cozy and intimate, too, with high-tops for two. The large windows facing CHS Field and the shiny fermentation tanks on an adjacent wall give the dining room plenty of direct and reflected light. But Birch's has a few darker corners for those who prefer more privacy.

The hardwood floors, the large outline of Minnesota made from license plates and birch trunks, the birch branch accents and the wall-size mosaics made with the cross-sections of tree trunks give the restaurant the makings of a northwoods resort. The Hooker's green hexagonal tiles behind the fermentation tanks, the dark Naugahyde benches and the industrial-chic ceiling contribute to an upscale urban feel. Then there is hammerschlagen, a game Birch's patrons play with a hammer and nails.

Trying to be all things to all people doesn't usually work, but somehow Birch's pulls it off. The space feels welcoming. To get there, patrons pass through the Octo Fishbar, part of restaurateur Tim McKee's Market House Collaborative, which took over Lenny Russo's former Heartland space in the fall of 2017. Partnering with McKee at Birch's is Shane Oporto, a graduate of Le Cordon Bleu.

Oporto worked for five years as a private chef for a family in the Bahamas before returning to the Twin Cities to cook at the elegant but now defunct Porter & Frye restaurant in Minneapolis' Ivy Hotel. He then took a job as sous chef at McKee's Libertine restaurant in South Minneapolis before advancing to chef de cuisine at McKee's La Belle Vie in the spring of 2015. The last gig didn't last long, and Oporto wound up at the Lynhall on Lyndale Avenue before hooking up with McKee again at Octo Fishbar.

At Birch's, Oporto takes advantage of in-house meat purveyor Peterson Limousin Meats and in-house baker Michelle Gayer's milk buns from Market House's Salty Tart to produce what the *Star Tribune's* Rick Nelson called one of the five best burgers in the Twin Cities in 2018.

Oporto credits the grass- and grain-fed beef raised on Peterson's Osceola, Wisconsin, farm and his own ability to have the run of the butcher shop for the quality of Birch's Burger (\$14). The hefty stack of two quarter-pound patties, white American cheese and pickles is pretty simple, but also pretty good.



Hot Dish By Morgan Smith

My wife, Mecca, and I stopped by early on a Friday evening and split one of the burgers, a Spicy Fried Chicken Sandwich (\$13), an order of fries (\$6) and a cup of Chicken & White Bean Chili (\$5). The dozen seats at the bar were already taken, so we sat in the dining room where the remaining 50 or so seats were steadily filling up around us.

Before we dug into our food, Mecca ordered a Blood Orange Berliner Weiss. It was happy hour, so she got the \$6 pint for \$4, the same price as my IBC Root Beer. Mild like kombucha, the Berliner Weiss has less carbonation than a typical beer. With each swig, the blood orange flavor arrived before the malty aftertaste. "Nice!" Mecca said.

The fries at Birch's are almost the size of shoestring potatoes. They were tasty, and there were plenty of them.

The chili paste on the chicken sandwich wasn't as spicy as we had feared. The sesame oil kimchi was interesting, but the breading was a tad too cumbersome for my taste. My vote, and Mecca's as well, went to the burger.

The chili was rather smoky and not as thick as I like it. However, it had plenty of chunks of chicken and a bushel of beans in the broth, which was really yummy. I'd order it again in a heartbeat.

I returned to Birch's late on a Thursday afternoon for a quick meal before a meeting. This time I ordered the Beer Cheese Soup (cup \$5, bowl \$8) and the Smoked Pork Tacos (\$9). The twin tacos had plenty of pork and avocado that was mashed into a nice paste accented by salsa, onion and cilantro. To tell you the truth, it would be hard to choose between the tacos and the burger as my favorite.

I told the server the beer cheese soup was different from what I had come to expect of this popular menu item, and she replied, "Yes, it has a definite kick." I enjoyed the soup, but I think I'll order the chili next time.



A Birch's Burger and Blood Orange Berliner Weiss at its brewery and taproom at 289 E. Fifth St. PHOTOS BY BRAD STAUFFER

I asked about dessert, and the server told me that Birch's had Key Lime Pie (\$9) from Salty Tart. "It's the best I've ever had," she said.

Of course she'd say that, but when the quarter-pie slice arrived in a silver pot with a thick graham cracker crust and an even thicker meringue, it was a thing of beauty to behold. I'm not sure that it was as good as the key lime pies I've had in Key West, Florida, but it was definitely the best I've had in the Twin Cities.

Birch's Lowertown opens at 4 p.m. on weekdays and 11 a.m. on weekends. It has a piano bar and lounge on the lower level it calls the Barrel House that is open Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings. The Barrel House has live entertainment most nights and the same menu as the Tap Room upstairs but on a more limited basis. Looks like fun.

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On the Town

Music fit for a queen

Oratorio Society recognizes Victoria's patronage of the arts on 200th anniversary of the monarch's birth

BY ANNE MURPHY

As the Minnesota Oratorio Society tells it, Queen Victoria was a lover of fine music. The long-serving and influential English sovereign was a fervent patron of the musical arts, and on the occasion of her 200th birthday the chorus and orchestra will pay tribute to her by performing the music of composers who were near and dear to her.

The Oratorio Society will present "Victoria: A Life in Music" at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13, at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, 519 Oak Grove St. in Minneapolis, and at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 14, at Hamline Church United Methodist, 1514 Englewood Ave. in St. Paul.

The society had previously looked to the British for a concert program in 2014 inspired by the PBS television series "Downton Abbey." "Victoria" came about in a more circuitous manner.

"I was originally planning to do a concert of Walt Whitman's music, as 2019 is also his 200th birthday," said Oratorio Society artistic director Matthew Mehaffey. "In the course of researching Whitman's music, I kept coming across Victoria's bicentenary, and I changed gears as I learned about the queen's support and love of music.

"The fun thing about this concert is that not only will the audience hear great music, they'll hear stories about Victoria and her connection to the music," Mehaffey said. "We'll be doing music by a who's who of 19th-century composers. Mendelssohn, Wagner, Sullivan, Strauss, Elgar—all of these composers had direct contact with Victoria, and many of them wrote music dedicated to her or were asked to write music by her. It's amazing to see the breadth of creative work that came to fruition because of Victoria's generosity."

The daughter of Prince Edward and granddaughter of King George III, Victoria was queen of England from 1837 until her death in 1901. Some of the music in the upcoming program will be familiar to nearly



Matthew Mehaffey conducts the Oratorio Society of Minnesota chorus and orchestra in performance.

"We'll be doing music by a who's who of 19th-century composers. Mendelssohn, Wagner, Sullivan, Strauss, Elgar — all of these composers had direct contact with Queen Victoria, and many of them wrote music dedicated to her or were asked to write music by her."

everyone, Mehaffey said, such as the bridal chorus by Wagner. But some of the music will be new to audiences, such as "Carmen Saeculare," the ode written by Charles Villiers Stanford in celebration of Victoria's jubilee in 1887.

"I think the audience will be thrilled to hear the new music and will also enjoy learning the history behind the music they already know," Mehaffey said. "I hadn't known that Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, was such a serious musician and fancied himself a composer as well. We'll do a piece by Albert during the concert that Victoria herself played on the piano."

"Dr. Mehaffey is an expert at putting together people-pleasing programs," said Debora Slee, a Highland Park resident who has sung with the Oratorio Society since 1991. "He has woven together works from Victoria's life with narration provided by the

wonderfully talented Bradley Greenwald.

"Our soloists and instrumentalists are always top-notch," Slee said, "and Helen Jensen, our accompanist, is amazing. We'll even have a bagpipe for the first time in Oratorio Society history. A bagpiper accompanied Queen Victoria's body from Scotland to England after her death."

Jensen, a Macalester-Groveland resident, has been the Oratorio Society's accompanist since 1993. "One of my favorite compositions in the program is an Irish folk song, 'Revenge for Skibbereen,'" she said. "The town of Skibbereen in Ireland suffered a great famine between 1845 and 1852. Several uprisings against British rule also occurred there."

There are many excellent choirs in the Twin Cities, said Judy Parr, a Summit-University resident who has been singing with the Oratorio Society for three years. "What makes the Oratorio Society different

is that we do programs that allow you to learn about the history behind the music," she said. "Making that connection is fun and educational.

"We have a very dedicated group of singers," Parr said. "And Dr. Mehaffey is always so enthusiastic. He can convey what he wants us to do so well. He elicits the kind of music he wants to hear. And it usually only takes him one try in telling us."

"The Oratorio Society has been a wonderful experience," Jensen said. "It's a community chorus, so for many members, after a long day of work, the music-making at rehearsals can be restorative."

The Oratorio Society "meets the need for a high-quality nonprofessional chorus to allow experienced musicians to sing a wide repertoire of music with professional soloists and orchestra," Slee said. "With just one rehearsal a week, it fits into the schedules of people who otherwise wouldn't have time."

Joining Mehaffey, Jensen and the Oratorio Society chorus and orchestra on April 13 and 14 will be actor Suzanne Koeplinger, actor and baritone Greenwald and soprano Jennifer Olson. Tickets for "Victoria: A Life in Music" are \$20, \$30 and \$40 and available at oratorio.org. The audience on April 13 will be invited to stay after the concert for birthday cake provided by Grand Avenue's Wuollet's Bakery.

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On the Town *Briefly*

Music

Dan “Daddy Squeeze” Newton will perform a mix of Cajun and Tex-Mex music in a free concert from 6-8 p.m. Thursday, April 11, in the Ratskeller at Summit Brewing, 910 Montreal Circle.

Singer-songwriter and guitarist Todd Snider, in support of his new album, “Cash Cabin Sessions,” will perform at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 12, at the Fitzgerald Theater, 10 E. Exchange St. Tickets are \$30 and \$35. Call 800-514-3849 or visit etix.com.

Ancia Saxophone Quartet, featuring Joan Hutton, Melissa Reiser, Matthew Sintchak and Angela Wyatt on alto, tenor, soprano and baritone saxophones, respectively, will perform at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13, in the Magazine Room at the Latimer Library, 90 W. Fourth St. The free concert will feature works by Libby Larsen, Jennifer Higdon, Laura Caviani, Christopher Rutkowski, Robin McLaughlin and Stephen Snowden.

“Voices of Angels,” Gregorian chant and choral music by the Benedictine nuns and monks of 17th-century Italy, will be performed by the Rose Ensemble at 8 p.m. Saturday, April 13, at the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. Eight singers will be joined by Paula Fagerberg on Baroque triple harp and Michael Asmus or organ. Tickets are \$38, \$28 and \$15, \$10 for students, free for children age 12 and under. Call 651-225-4340.

Celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month with live music and inspiring stories from some of Minnesota’s most notable jazz musicians from 2-3:30 p.m. Sunday, April 14, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. Singer Patty Peterson will emcee the



“A Body of Work.” A retrospective of the art of St. Catherine University Professor Emerita Patricia Olson, featuring paintings and prints of the figure as a conveyor of meaning, is one of three new exhibits that will open with a reception on Saturday, April 13, at SCU’s Catherine G. Murphy Gallery. For details, see Exhibits listing below.

program. The cost is \$20 for adults, \$10 for children ages 5-17. Call 651-259-3015.

Lithuanian pianist Ieva Jokuvabiciute and violinist Ariana Kim will join the Chamber Music Society of Minnesota in works by Dvorak, Gershwin, Lasse Thoresen and Ruth Crawford Seeger at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 14, in Sundin Music Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$25, \$20 for seniors and free for students. Visit chambermusicmn.org.

The music of Scott Joplin, George Gershwin and other dance music will be performed by pianist Jeffrey Siegel in a Keyboard Conversation at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, in Sundin Music Hall, 1531 Hewitt Ave. Tickets are \$28, \$13 for students. Call 651-523-2459.

The Palestrina Choir from St. Mary’s Pro-Cathedral in Dublin will perform at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, at the Cathedral of St. Paul. Admission is by donation.

Exhibits

The Carondelet Village Art Crawl continues through April at the complex at 525 S. Fairview Ave. Ninety-two works by 28 artists are displayed, including paintings, drawings, photographs, quilts, other textiles, wood sculpture, ceramics and mixed-media. The public is invited. Call 651-695-5000.

Capitol Builders Tour, a 90-minute program highlighting the talented craftsmen who built

Minnesota’s Capitol in 1905 and the work that went into restoring it earlier this decade, will step out at 1 p.m. Saturday, April 13. The cost is \$10, \$9 for seniors, veterans and college students, \$8 for children ages 5-17. Call 651-259-3015 or visit cart.mnhs.org.

The Catherine G. Murphy Gallery at St. Catherine University will open three new exhibits on April 13. They include paintings and prints of the figure as a conveyor of meaning by Professor Emerita Patricia Olson; “Nostalgic Femininity,” about the relationship between nostalgia and gender in Japanese woodblock prints of the late 19th century; and the work of senior studio art major Amanda Grove. An opening reception will be held from 6-8 p.m. Saturday, April 13. Admission is free. Visit gallery.stkate.edu.

“Close to the Edge: The Birth of Hip-Hop Architecture” will be displayed from April 15 through June 15 at SpringBOX, 262 University Ave. Curated by Sekou Cooke of the Syracuse University School of Architecture, the show explores this emerging architectural movement through the work of 25 professionals, academics and students, including James Garrett Jr. of St. Paul-based 4RM+ULA. An opening reception will be held from 6-9 p.m. Monday, April 15.

Dance

The Macalester College Theater and Dance Department will present “Open Despite,” new work by student choreographers Fiona Adams, Claire Grace, Emma Harrison, Midori Hasegawa, Ekaterina Hofrenning, Megan Maguire, Xuemeng Yao and Long Nguyen, on April 11, 12 and 14 in the theater of the Fine Arts Center at Mac. Show times



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are 7 p.m. Thursday, 7 and 9 p.m. Friday and 2 and 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is free. Call 651-696-6359.

Ragamala Dance Company and the string quartet Brooklyn Rider will share the stage at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 12, in the O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University. Brooklyn Rider will open the evening with "Healing Modes" featuring Beethoven's Song of Holy Thanksgiving and works by Reena Esmail, Gabriela Lena Frank, Matana Roberts, Caroline Shaw and Du Yun. Ragamala will perform "Nocturne," choreographed by Ashwini Ramaswamy from imagery found in the writings of Rabindranath Tagore, Jorge Luis Borges and the Hindu Vedas. Tickets are \$34. Call 651-690-6700.

Books

Common Good Books, 38 S. Snelling Ave., will play host to readings and discussions with Macalester College English Professor Peter Bognanni and his novel, *This Book is Not Yet Rated*, at 7 p.m. April 10; poets Cary Waterman and Philip Bryant and their collections, *Threshold* and *The Promised Land*, respectively, 7 p.m. April 11; and poets Michael Moos, Tim Nolan and Joyce Sutphen, 3 p.m. April 14. The programs are free. Call 651-225-8989.

SubText Books, 6 W. Fifth St., will play host to author Maryse Meijer reading from her story collection, *Rag*, at 7 p.m. April 10; and Jill Kalz reading from her story collection, *The Winter Bees*, at 7 p.m. April 25. Admission is free. Call 651-493-2791.

Brian Johnson, a freelance writer for the *Villager*, will sign copies of his new book, *Murder in Chisago County: The Unsolved Johnson Family Mystery*, from 6-7 p.m. Wednesday, April 24, at Diamond Lake Lutheran Church, 5760 Portland Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Johnson is a grand nephew of Alvira Johnson, the Harris woman who with her seven children was murdered in 1933 and found beneath the smoldering ruins of their farmhouse.

Film

Charm City, a documentary about Baltimore's response to three years of unparalleled violence, will be screened at 7 p.m. Tuesday, April 16, at the Minnesota History Center, 345 W. Kellogg Blvd. A discussion will follow. Admission is free, though space is limited. Call 651-259-3000.

Family

Highland Park Library, 1974 Ford Pkwy., will offer Baby Storytime at 10:15 and 11:15 a.m. Wednesdays; Nature Smart, a trading post in natural science and history, 4 p.m. Wednesdays; Createch, high-tech fun for teens, 3:30 p.m. Thursdays; Children's Storytime, 11 a.m. Saturdays and 10:30 a.m. Mondays; Amharic Storytime, 6 p.m. Tuesdays; a workshop in Native American beadwork with Julie Boada of the Fond du Lac nation, 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 16; and Yarn Night for all ages and abilities, 6:15 p.m. Thursday, April 18. Call 651-695-3700.

The Loki Puppet Players will perform *The Poetry of Puppetry 2* at 10 a.m. Thursday, April 11, 10 a.m. Friday, April 19, and 6:30 p.m. Monday, April 22, on the historic Jemne stage at Latimer Library, 90 W. Fourth St. Admission is free. Call 651-266-7034.

Red Balloon Bookshop, 891 Grand Ave., will host a launch party for Kelsey Sutton's young-adult novel, *Smoke and Key*, 6:30 p.m. April 12; author Phyllis Root and illustrator Betsy Bowen introducing their new picture book, *The Lost Forest*, 3 p.m. April 13; story time with Jane Yolen, Heidi E.Y. Stemple and their new picture book, *A Kite for*

Moon, 10:30 a.m. April 20; and story time with Lindsey McDivitt and *Nature's Friend*, her picture-book biography of artist Gwen Frostic, 3 p.m. April 20. Call 651-224-8320.

An Easter egg hunt for children ages 2-7 will be held on Sunday, April 14, and Saturday, April 20, on the lawn at the James J. Hill House, 240 Summit Ave. Participants can search for eggs, enjoy a snack, hear stories and explore the first floor of the elegant mansion. Doors open at 9:30 a.m. and the hunt begins at 10 a.m. Children must be accompanied by an adult. The cost is \$8, free for kids age 2 and under. Call 651-297-2555.

Babies, toddlers and preschoolers are invited to an intergenerational story and play hour beginning at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, April 16, at the Minnesota Veterans Home, 5105 Minnehaha Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Veterans will read books and lead songs with live ukulele music for the first half hour. Play time follows. Call 612-548-5751.

Dodge Nature Center, 1701 Charlton St. in West St. Paul, will offer Frogs and Toads, a trip to the pond for children ages 3-8 to hear a chorus of these creatures from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, April 18. The cost is \$10 per child. Call 651-455-4531.

Theater

Sisters of Peace, a new play by Doris Baizley about the four McDonald sisters—Brigid, Jane, Rita and Kate—all members of the Sisters of St. Joseph and longtime antiwar activists, will close with performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, April 11-14, at the History Theater, 30 E. 10th St. Tickets are \$20-\$42 with discounts for seniors and students. Call 651-292-4320.

Little Women, a drama based on the first half of the novel by Louisa May Alcott, will close with performances at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, April 11-14, at Theatre in the Round, 245 Cedar Ave. S. in Minneapolis. Tickets are \$22. Call 612-333-3010.

Dear Lenny, a meditation on Bernstein's commitment to music, love and social activism, will be staged at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 12, in Weyerhaeuser Auditorium at Landmark Center. Dan Chouinard, Diana Grasselli, Bradley Greenwald and Prudence Johnson star. Admission is \$18 in advance, \$22 at the door, \$12 for students. Visit tinyurl.com/y4s67hvk.

The Golden Record Project, a combination art installation, drama and interactive museum celebrating the time capsules NASA launched into deep space aboard Voyager I and II in 1977, will be staged from April 12 through May 4 by Sandbox Theatre, 3109 E. 42nd St. in Minneapolis. Show times are 7:30 p.m. Thursdays through Sundays and Monday, April 22. Tickets are \$10-\$30 or whatever you can afford on April 18 and 22. Visit sandboxtheatreonline.com.

The Diary of Anne Frank, Park Square Theatre's 20th anniversary production of the play for high school audiences, will be performed for the public at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 13, on the proscenium stage at 20 W. Seventh Place. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for students. Call 651-291-7005.

Et cetera

The World's Largest Textile Garage Sale will be held from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, April 13, at the University of Minnesota ReUse Warehouse, 883 29th Ave. SE. in Minneapolis. Fabric, yarn, looms, tools, sewing machines, books, buttons and notions will be featured. Admission is \$3 on April 13, \$30-\$35 for the preview sale from 5:30-8 p.m. Friday, April 12. For more information, visit textilecentermn.org.

Sports



The Wright Call
By Dave Wright

Bemoaning Wild's fall from grace

The hockey season in these parts ended on a down note on April 4 when the disappointing Minnesota Wild dropped their final home game of the season to Boston 3-0 at Xcel Energy Center. There was one more Wild game in Dallas two nights later, but by then this area's hockey fans had moved on to other interests.

The Minnesota Twins, who were off to good start to their season, were playing on TV in Philadelphia. It was a chance to see if Bryce Harper was really worth the \$300 million he'll be getting from the Phillies.

The Final Four was taking place in the House of Zygi in Minneapolis. So what if there was only one team—Michigan State—that you even knew of? It was another chance to show the country we know how to do things properly in Minnesota.

Hardy souls could also head out to the select group of golf courses that were already open, including Highland National and the Highland 9-Hole.

Readers of the *Villager* may have noticed that there's a new soccer stadium about to open for business on Snelling and St. Anthony avenues. How to get there and how to get tickets for the newest show in town take precedence over moping over another season of what might have been for the Wild.

All things considered, it was a tough year for many puck aficionados. The Gopher men's team struggled to get attention all season. The team did manage to secure home ice for a first-round playoff series against Michigan. However, interest was so weak that the Gophers barely drew more fans to Mariucci Arena than Hamline and Wisconsin-River Falls did for their NCAA Division III quarterfinal game at the TRIA Rink in downtown St. Paul.

Minnesota exited the postseason the following week at Notre Dame. In the past, how that game ended—in part due to a horrendous penalty call in overtime—might have caused an uproar that would have lasted for days. Instead, the story

WRIGHT CALL ► 24

Softball preview

It's a numbers game for some local teams

BY BILL WAGNER

High school softball has managed to survive, though some programs are finding it hard to keep their numbers up. Local coaches cite stiffer competition from other spring sports, such as lacrosse, as one reason. Fewer multisport athletes is another.

Cretin-Derham Hall coach Patrick Bowlin has 35 girls out for softball this spring. It's enough to field three teams, "but it's tight," he said. "What can be done about it? I wish I knew."

St. Paul Academy coach Liz Kocon, who played softball in Texas and Kansas, said she noticed after moving to Minnesota that the sport "is not very popular up here." Last year, she had only 9-10 players "on a good day," she said. This year, she hopes to have 13-16 players on the varsity and is working to get more girls interested in the sport.

Henry Sibley coach Phil Stohr said his softball numbers are OK, with 41 girls out for varsity, junior varsity and ninth-grade teams. He encourages his athletes to play three sports. "That way we're less likely to lose the player who wants to just play volleyball or basketball," he said.

Still, not all programs are voicing concerns about participation levels. Central coach Fiona Lodge is working with around 52 girls on three squads. "A lot of our varsity girls are really passionate about softball," she said. "I think they spread the word around school."

A tough sell or not, here's a look at the local teams as the season gets underway:



Raider senior third baseman Megan Meyers (right) runs through drills with junior teammates Nicole Muetzel and Alison Meyers. PHOTO BY BRAD STAUFFER

CENTRAL

League: St. Paul City
Last year's record: 10-12
Coach: Fiona Lodge

Key players: senior shortstop Rosalie Kurtz, senior second baseman Grace Dodge, junior outfielder Ana Rodoc.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Hitting and defense should be pretty good for Central, but rebuilding the pitching staff is in order.

Outlook: "We should be pretty strong," Lodge said. "We can contend for the conference title." Highland Park and Como Park should provide good competition.

CRETIN-DERHAM HALL

League: Suburban East
Last year's record: 11-13
Coach: Patrick Bowlin

Key players: junior pitcher Stella Dolan, senior infielder Maria Bedford, senior third baseman Megan Meyers, junior infielder Cece Ziegler.

Team strengths/weaknesses: CDH will have powerful pitching and strong defense up the middle, but hitting will be a challenge.

Outlook: Bowlin said his squad will play plenty of low-scoring games. "We'll have to play a small ball," he said. He is hoping the Raiders can move up on the likes of Stillwater, Park and Forest Lake in a tough league.

HENRY SIBLEY

League: Metro East
Last year's record: 11-8
Coach: Phil Stohr

Key players: junior pitcher Jaelyn Orth, junior outfielder Maria Ramos, junior third baseman Jaleena Moryn, senior catcher Haley Fleischacker, senior catcher Peggy Dunn, senior second baseman Tara Hinz.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Sibley should have impressive pitcher-catcher batteries, but will probably struggle to

SOFTBALL PREVIEW ► 24

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23◀ SOFTBALL PREVIEW

put up runs.

Outlook: Stohr is hoping the Warriors will be able to compete near the top of the league with North St. Paul, Hill-Murray and Hastings. "If we can improve our offense, we can be very competitive," he said.

HIGHLAND PARK

League: St. Paul City
Last year's record: 9-11
Coach: Louie Neurer

Key players: senior catcher Chloe Smith, senior outfielder Majeur Tucker, senior infielder Bella Ciccarelli, junior pitcher Jo Li Lacy.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Highland will sport three pitchers who can throw strikes and let the defense help them out. It has decent team speed, though it's not deep throughout the roster and experience is a question mark.

Outlook: "I'd like to see us improve and beat some teams outside the City Conference," said first-year coach Neurer. "That and maybe win a playoff game or two." The Scots should be

near the top of the conference along with Central and Como Park.

MINNEHAHA ACADEMY

League: Independent Metro Athletic
Last year's record: 12-12
Coach: Mike DiNardo

Key players: junior shortstop Kate Pryor, senior pitcher/catcher Kaylee Harnack, junior center fielder/pitcher Tessa Leiner, junior outfielder Alexandra Pluntz.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Minnehaha has its entire starting nine back from a year ago and some depth. The team should be able to hit, though it will have to solve some pitching issues.

Outlook: DiNardo said the Redhawks are ready to challenge for the league crown, which Providence Academy won a year ago. "We have a good shot at being one of the top teams," he said.

ROOSEVELT

League: Minneapolis City
Last year's record: 5-11
Coach: Jacqueline Wincek

Key players: senior catcher Ebony Moore, junior outfielder Sasha Reiman, senior pitcher Kathleen Grube, seventh-grade infielder Kathlyn Evers.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Roosevelt will have decent pitching, catching and speed to go along with depth, but there will also be some inexperience to overcome.

Outlook: "We're going to be young this year," Wincek said, "but I hope to be better than .500." Washburn and Southwest look like the two toughest teams in the conference.

ST. PAUL ACADEMY

League: Independent Metro Athletic
Last year's record: 3-14
Coach: Liz Kocon

Key players: sophomore pitcher Jane Christakos, junior pitcher/infielder Kathleen Bishop, eighth-grade catcher Greta Magnuson.

Team strengths/weaknesses: SPA should be able to hit and run, though it will have to address some pitching issues.

Outlook: Kocon is methodically trying to get her program on solid foundation. "We're going to work hard and be a scrappy team, even if we're losing 10-0," she said. The Spartans should improve on last year's record.

VISITATION

League: Tri-Metro
Last year's record: 9-8
Coach: Dan Jameson

Key players: junior catcher Jenna Hoops, junior outfielder Anna Zauha, junior third baseman Anastasia Johns, sophomore pitcher Izzy Griffin, junior second baseman Ellie McConville.

Team strengths/weaknesses: Visitation will have a strong junior class that should bode well for now and next year. On the down side, the Blazers overall will be young and inexperienced.

Outlook: "We're in a rebuilding year this season," Jameson said. "We have no seniors, so there's a lot of room to grow." St. Agnes and Holy Angels look like the conference kingpins.

23◀ WRIGHT CALL

was buried in the middle of the sports sections.

Things weren't much better at the X this year. It started with a couple of injuries to key personnel. Soon the Wild, once impregnable at home, were losing regularly to teams already out of the playoff picture.

There was one last shining moment—a 5-1 win on April 2 against a Winnipeg team that obliterated the Wild in last year's playoffs. But that joy was soon quashed when a Colorado victory eliminated the Wild from postseason play.

One never likes to end a season on a down note, so here are some happy thoughts for folks who think ice isn't just for cooling drinks.

It was a very good year for female hockey players hereabouts. It started with the state girls' high school hockey tournament. Yes, Edina won the Class AA title for the third year in a row, but Brainerd put up a terrific, entertaining fight before bowing out in double overtime in the championship

game. Moving the consolation games to TRIA proved to be a wise decision. Like basketball, girls' high school hockey has made a slow but steady improvement in Minnesota.

The U of M women had a terrific hockey season, advancing to the NCAA finals before losing to Wisconsin. The team consistently drew crowds of 2,000 or more to Ridder Arena for a roster that has 21 players who are either native Minnesotans or played their prep hockey at a Minnesota school.

St. Thomas and Hamline, both of which had rosters with only a few non-Minnesotans, were ranked highly all season, dominated the MIAC and advanced to the NCAA Division III Frozen Four. Hamline drew a full house of 1,500-plus to TRIA for the aforementioned playoff game with River Falls. When the Tommies and Pipers met in the semifinals at St. Thomas Arena the following week, the place was packed and rocked all night. A healthy contingent returned the next night to see Hamline play the title game against Plattsburgh State.

Piper junior Bre Simon achieved a rarity when the Elk

River native was named Division III Player of the Year by not one but two national organizations. St. Thomas coach Tom Palkowski was named National Coach of the Year. Hockey fans who only pay attention to Wild games missed all this, but lots of local puckheads found joy in the women's game.

Still, there's no question the Wild's fall from grace this year dominated the local hockey scene. An old team did get younger as the season progressed, but it's hard to say it got any better. There are still five years to go in hefty contracts to Zach Parise and Ryan Suter, both of whom are at the age when injuries become the norm for hockey players. Accordingly, there could be some grim times ahead. Hockey fans have sporting options that are considerably less expensive than spending \$75-\$100 a seat to watch the Florida Panthers play the locals. The hockey public may be an optimistic lot, but they're also a knowledgeable one. They know a good—or a bad—deal when they see it.

Dave Wright can be reached at dwright53@msn.com.



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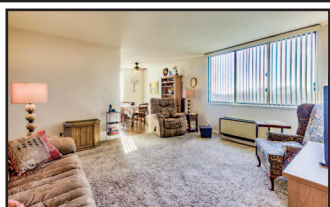
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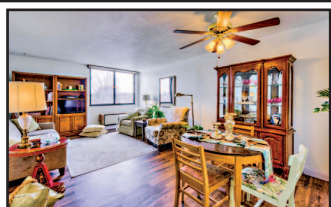
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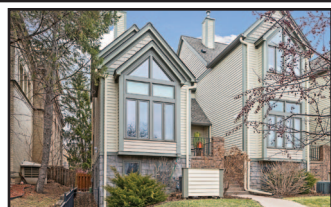
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464 FRONTENAC

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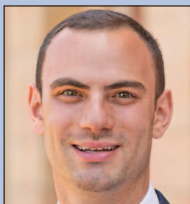


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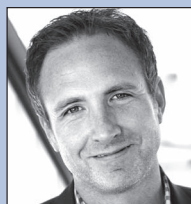
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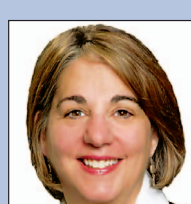
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